Swami Muktananda

SECRET OF THE SIDDHAS

Swami Muktananda
Paramahamsa

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TRANSLATED BY
SWAMI CHIDVILASANANDA

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CONTENTS

Introduction by Paul Zweig		*vii*
An Appreciation		*xix*
Invocation		*xxiii*

BOOK I The Yoga of the Siddhas

Chapter	1	The Heart of Siddha Yoga	3
	2	Kundalini and *Śaktipāta*	12
	3	The Inner Experience	21
	4	Nityananda	28
	5	The Lords of Equality	34
	6	The City of Love	43
	7	The State of a Siddha	54
	8	The Guru is the Means	66

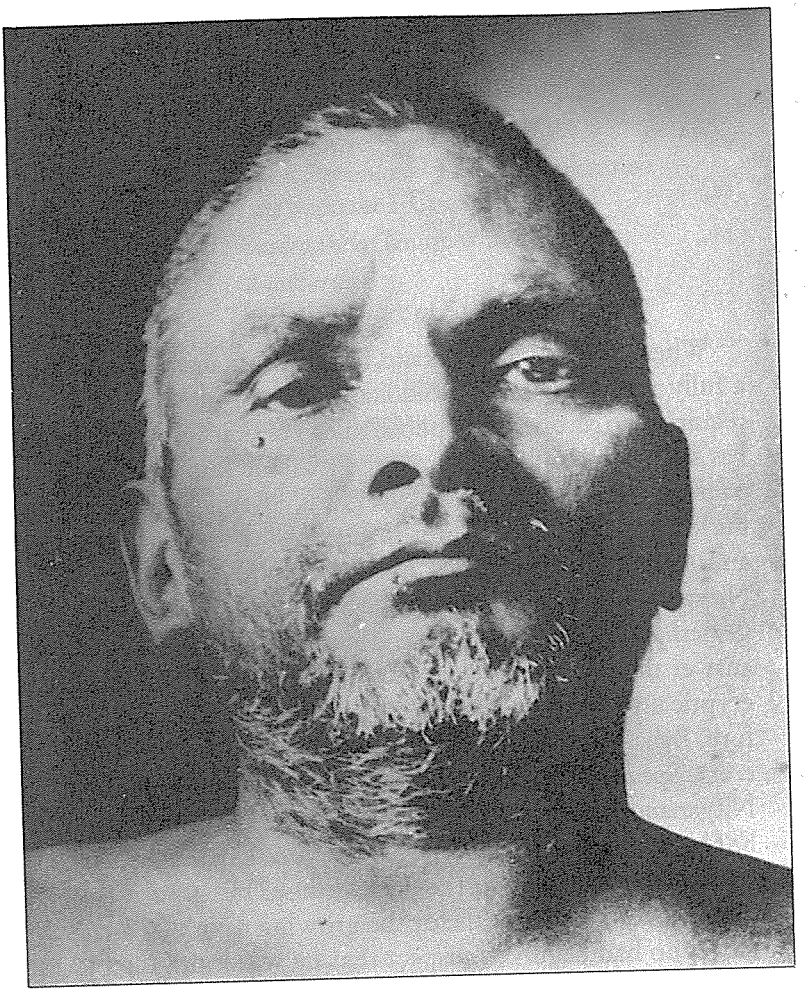
BOOK II The Philosophy of the Siddhas

Chapter	9	The Origin of Kashmir Shaivism	79
	10	*Śāṃbhavopāya*	82
	11	*Śāktopāya*	89
	12	*Āṇavopāya*	96
	13	Summary of the *Upāyas*	104
	14	*Paramaśiva*: The Supreme Consciousness	106
	15	God's Independent and Inseparable Shakti	110
	16	*Ābhāsavāda*: The Theory of Manifestation	113
	17	*Bimbapratibimbanyāya*: The Theory of an Object and Its Reflection	117
	18	The Kingdom of *Vikalpa*	123

Chapter	19	*Advaitabhāva*: The Attitude of Non-duality	129
	20	*Śivadṛṣṭi*: The Outlook of Shiva	137
	21	*Pravṛttivāda*: The Theory of Extroversion	142
	22	The Cause of Bondage	144
	23	Release from Bondage	145
	24	*Saṃvit Parāmarśa*: The Comprehension of the Supreme I-Consciousness	147
	25	*Śivasamāveśa*: Union with Shiva	149
	26	*Jñānasvarūpa*: The True Nature of Knowledge	152
	27	*Pratibhā*: The Light of Consciousness	155
	28	*Avabhāsa and Ābhāsādṛṣṭi*: Seeing the World as a Reflection	159
	29	*Spandanirṇaya*: The Discussion of *Spanda*	163
	30	*Spandasvarūpa*: The Nature of *Spanda*	164
	31	*Spandalakṣana*: The Definition of *Spanda*	167
	32	*Spandanirdeśa*: The Indication of *Spanda*	169
	33	*Anusandhāna* of *Spandaśakti*: Contemplation of *Spandaśakti*	172
	34	*Vedānta*	179
	35	*Pratyabhijñāsāra*: The Essence of the Doctrine of Recognition	189
	36	The *Vijñānabhairava*	195
	37	The Abode of the Self	222
		Glossary	*225*
		Index	*241*
		The Tradition of the Siddha Yoga Lineage	*253*
		Further Reading	*255*

INTRODUCTION to the First Edition

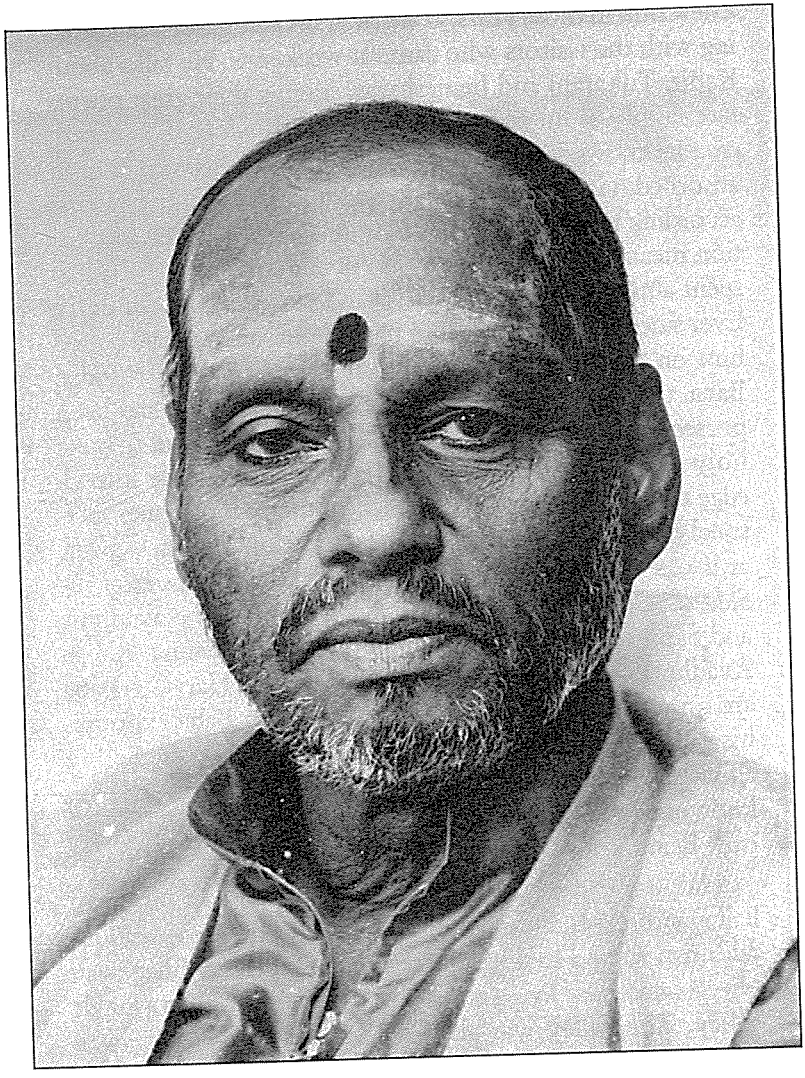
When, twenty-four years ago, Swami Muktananda became a fully realized Master, a Siddha, it was an interior event, requiring no certificates or public titles. He simply knew it, he has said, as certainly and profoundly as one knows physical pain or overwhelming love. His Guru, Swami Nityananda, built a small house for him in Gavdevi, a cluster of mud and straw huts in a valley north of Bombay. Bhagawan Nityananda would send visitors to him from his ashram in Ganeshpuri, half a mile away, and Swami Muktananda would answer their questions, translating Bhagawan Nityananda's cryptic utterances into plain language. From the first, therefore, Baba Muktananda was a teacher, an expounder of secrets. Speaking of those years, Baba says that Bhagawan Nityananda simply told him to live there, that was all, and he obeyed his Guru. Even after his Guru took mahasamadhi, Baba went on living in the small house. He grew a rose garden and cooked meals for the growing number of visitors who had begun to suspect that he was more than an intelligent and well-spoken yogi, that he was, indeed, the heir to Bhagawan Nityananda's power, his spiritual son, a Siddha.



Bhagawan Nityananda of Ganeshpuri

I see Baba Muktananda through the eyes of devotees who knew him in those years, at work in his rose garden or speaking with the visitors who came at weekends. He talks about Kabir, Tukaram and Jnaneshwar, singing their great poems not simply as literature, but as the expression of an experience he knows deeply and completely, for it is his own. I see an absorbed, vigorous man, firm in the daily delight of living according to his Guru's instruction, even when that instruction meant reversing the pattern of a lifetime. For Baba had spent almost twenty-five years wandering the roads of India. Ever since an austere avadhut named Nityananda had patted him on the head while visiting his school in South India, Baba, then a fifteen-year-old boy named Krishna, had been possessed of a deep desire, amounting to a passion, to meet holy men. He wanted to acquire for himself the knowledge they possessed that gave each of them, for all their personal differences and eccentricities, the same radiant power, as if one Self peered through all their acts. In *Secret of the Siddhas*, Swami Muktananda pays tribute to the avadhuts and Siddhas he met during those years: Zipruanna, Ranga Avadhut, Siddharudha Swami, Kabir Das and Hari Giri Baba are only some of the great beings to whom Baba expresses his gratitude for having given him glimpses of the Self in all its playfulness, even when he was still seeking it, not yet knowing how patiently the Self sported in the solitude of his own being.

Half a lifetime later, Swami Muktananda met his Guru halfway across India and found that he was the same avadhut who had started him on his search long before, Bhagawan Nityananda, now living beside a hot sulphur spring in a jungle valley. The valley was alive with activity, for Bhagawan Nityananda's fame had stirred the people of the surrounding countryside. They cleared roads, built houses, created villages, an ashram, a hospital, schools, all as service to the enigmatic holy man they loved.



Swami Muktananda Paramahamsa

Here begins the story Baba has told in his spiritual autobiography, *Play of Consciousness*. It is the story of a disciple and a Master, of an inner journey as surprising and exciting as an adventure story. Above all, it is the story of a stubborn, loving soul being tested and triumphing because, by an alchemy of self-change that is at the heart of Siddha Yoga, he had wedded his inward being to his Guru so completely that he had become his Guru. This oneness, he has said, is the goal and the entire teaching of Siddha Yoga. As the philosopher Sören Kierkegaard wrote, "He who does the work becomes his own Father."

Since then, years have passed. The original house in Gavdevi is now part of a large building surrounded by other buildings in what has become a large ashram called Gurudev Siddha Peeth. Baba's rose garden has become a lovely park.* A town is springing up around it. Busloads of pilgrims come from all over India to see Baba and have his darshan, as he himself, years before, had walked all over the country to have the darshan of great beings. Yet I still see Baba as I imagine he was in that early time, living with the casualness and simplicity of a happy man, not "doing" anything, simply following his Guru's word: Live here, that's all. I remember the story an American disciple told me about a celebration that took place at Gurudev Siddha Peeth several years ago. Thousands of visitors were arriving; tents were being erected on open ground all over the ashram, even on rooftops. Everywhere preparations went on in a great clatter of activity. Sitting on his porch, Baba turned to this disciple and said, "You see, I'm just going to sit here, twirling my stick, but everything will get done." And as always, it did. I have never ceased to have that image of Baba: sitting casually, twirling his stick, in Ganeshpuri or New York, alone or surrounded

* In 1994 the residential areas and gardens were closed to the many pilgrims and visitors who were visiting every day, in order to preserve the stillness and peace that is so essential to the contemplative atmosphere of a Gurukula.

by thousands of busy devotees, speaking in Carnegie Hall or talking to a single person in his garden. Just twirling his stick but, with steadiness and grace, becoming a centre around which activity whirls: "a hub of the wheeled universe" as Walt Whitman wrote.

In Sanskrit a fully realized Master is called a paramahamsa, a supreme swan, and the symbol is expressive. A swan embodies self-control, in-gathered power, muscular elegance, whether it wheels overhead or moves stately and silent over the water. A swan is intensely fascinating. When it swims, it seems immobile, like a yogi locked in meditation. Such is a Paramahamsa: perfect, not as a work of art but as a living being whose perfection includes feelings and a living body and is therefore close to us, as an idealized image can never be.

At the heart of Siddha Yoga is the relationship with a Siddha, a Paramahamsa, who gives Shaktipat. A Siddha teaches that consciousness itself is perfection, containing thoughts and worlds, expanding to include all time and space or contracting to a single blade of grass. Emotions dart within it, Baba has written, like a bee alighting on the different petals of a flower. In the course of our lives we become creatures of change. Our minds flutter like butterflies in the stillness of a field. A Siddha's steadiness reminds us of the field of God. His stillness erupts within us and suddenly we are stunned by the shift in our minds. We are momentarily free. Shaktipat has propelled us into the mind's stillness where we are enthralled, not by the objects of consciousness, but by consciousness itself, which resembles a sky, overarching and blue. This is a Siddha's gift, the very gift he himself received from his Guru and that he passes on, intact, to us. Siddha Yoga consists of this: the heart's gift of a great being received by his disciple who, by receiving it, discovers that he is equally great, equally conscious.

In the Siddha tradition, this gift is called Shaktipat, and to call it a gift is only partly accurate. For Baba insists that

Shaktipat is not his to give or withhold: Shaktipat is taken as much as it is given. It is a kind of holy theft. The disciple's stubborn desire and his readiness take it, and the Siddha, happy to have been found out, lets it go. Baba calls this "disciple's grace". A Siddha exists to be found out and he does everything in his power to help his disciple. He reveals his "secret" in every way he can so that the disciple, not merely hearing words and thoughts, hears the deep tone of knowledge and is changed. In this sense, the "secret" is not any recipe or formula that the Guru imparts. It is not the subject of a previously concealed text. Truly speaking, the "secret" lies with the disciple, not the Guru. It is the place of that interior passage through which merely verbal know-ledge eludes the mind's changeable nature and plunges to the heart. The Guru is expert at finding this passage and unlocking it so that the disciple, hearing what is said, hears with all his heart, perhaps for the first time.

Among the stories Baba tells, there is one that expresses the "secret" of this most profound kind of learning with particular beauty and simplicity. Once a man named Hamid went with a friend to see Baba Musa and asked if he would accept them as disciples. Musa agreed and said, "You can start working in those fields over there." Hamid and his friend did what Baba Musa told them to do. For two years they worked punctually, with great love, from eight o'clock in the morning until eight o'clock at night. But after two years Hamid's friend began to think, "What's so unusual about this field? I have a field of my own; I could work there and consider that, too, to be service to the Guru." With these doubts in his mind, he left.

Meanwhile Hamid thought, "I'm serving the Guru already; why don't I wait and see what happens?" So Hamid went on with his work and as he did he became more and more interested in what he was doing. He began to feel a contentment within himself, and this contentment in turn increased his

interest. As his work became more satisfying, he stopped thinking about the hours he was spending, for he had begun to see that seva, or service to the Guru, was the supreme means to peace. He became so absorbed in his task that what had merely been work was not work to him anymore; what had been a field was not just a field. His seva had become a divine apprenticeship. He understood now that seva was not just seva; it was a way to immerse oneself in God through one's work. Thus seva itself was a technique. When Hamid realized this he became extremely happy.

During all this time he kept thinking about his Guru, until one day he decided to go to him again. When Baba saw him coming, he said, "Well, Hamid, is your work finished?"

"No, I'm still doing it," Hamid answered.

"Well, it's completed now. You can go. But remember: Everything is knowledge; everything is instruction. Wherever you become immersed in your seva you will receive inner wisdom." Saying that, he sent his disciple away.

Hamid left and went to Turkestan, where he decided to settle. As time passed, his seva took the form of knowledge and resided in his heart. He became a man of knowledge, and thousands of disciples came to study with him. He, in turn, made them perform seva to become aware of the majesty of the Guru. Hamid's fame spread far and wide. One day the friend who had first come with him to see Baba Musa heard stories about a powerful holy man in Turkestan. He decided to visit this holy man and see what he could learn from him.

Upon arriving at Hamid's ashram, he recognized his old Guru-brother. He remembered how he had once done seva with Hamid for two years, and now here he was, a great being.

"Brother, how did you attain this divinity?" he asked Hamid. "What secret did Baba Musa impart to you after I left?"

"Brother, Baba Musa didn't teach me any secret after you

left," Hamid answered. "I just went on working in the field and, as I did, knowledge began to arise in me. I didn't have to sit with my eyes closed and meditate. I experienced a state of meditation even while I was working. I began to have glimpses of ecstasy and love and became increasingly immersed in them. I saw the Supreme Consciousness pervading the entire universe. I saw Baba Musa in myself, in cows and in trees; I saw him in people. I saw that everything was God, or Baba Musa, or myself, and became ecstatic in the experience of the divine."

Such is the vision Baba gives us of the Guru's teaching, which is not concerned with personal advice, or complicated rituals, or burning the right kind of incense, but with a mysterious form of self-concentration called seva: service to the stillness in one's mind; service to the Guru, who is the mirror of Consciousness; service to humanity; service as an act both of love and of self-reliance, turning one's very life into a form of meditation.

Baba has often said that blind faith is an enemy of the Guru-disciple relationship. Not only should a person examine a Master carefully before accepting him in order to know whether his life and his teaching are truly one; he should be self-aware and observant, even as a disciple. For me, the unfailing sign of Baba's authority as a teacher is the bold simplicity of what he writes and says. In everything he does there is a tone of certainty and direct knowledge. Baba loves clarity. He writes as he speaks: urgently, generously, appealing not to theologians and philosophers, but to the elementary humanness in each of us. He tells us that knowledge is a form not only of thinking, but of living. He says, "God dwells within you as you" and means the you that exists at the deepest level of your being, as the Self. Clarity is the language of the Self and it is Baba's language.

Secret of the Siddhas is written in this tone of knowledge. It touches on every aspect of Baba's teaching, from practical

instructions on diet and the practice of meditation, to the nature of the inward experience as he has known it. In Book I, "The Yoga of the Siddhas", he writes about the great beings who meant so much to him and exhorts his disciples to understand their example. He writes about Bhagawan Nityananda from whom all his knowledge flows and to whom all his work is dedicated.

Book II, "The Philosophy of the Siddhas", deals with an aspect of Baba's teaching on which he has placed increasing emphasis in recent years: the philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism. This incomparably subtle branch of Indian thought is devoted to presenting a practical psychology of liberation. It offers a manual of the stages of learning, signalling the resistances the individual encounters as his mind clings to its limitations, even while the pull of the Self urges him onward. The terminology of Kashmir Shaivism is precise and technical. Although its language can at times be difficult for the layman, the underlying wisdom of the Shaivite sages is remarkably pungent and straightforward.

The *Śivasūtras* and the other principle texts of Kashmir Shaivism, such as the *Spandakārikās* and the *Pratyabhijñā-hṛdayam*, offer in compressed, sometimes enigmatic form a map of the divine, combined with a practical concern with Self-realization. At the heart of the process of self-change called sadhana, the Shaivite system places the clarifying presence of the Guru, a fully realized master who, as the *Śivasūtras* state, is considered to be the means to liberation. Over the centuries successive Masters have enriched the canon of Shaivite thought, as is customary in India, by means of commentaries on the original texts. This tradition of commentary has resulted in a body of scriptural writing that is alive and changing because it is grounded ever-anew in the experience and thoughtfulness of Siddhas. In "The Philosophy of the Siddhas" Baba has cut through the technical overlays of Shaivite philosophy to reveal its essential core as clearly

as has ever been done. Kashmir Shaivism, as Baba describes it, revels in the play of multiplicity and oneness that is the world. God is everywhere; He is everything. The world in its variety is not an illusion to be rejected. This eruptive and beautiful world is God's exuberance; it is God bursting into form. Individuality as we know it is merely a contracted form of God. In our condition as contracted individuals we have forgotten that the many are also One and the One is also many. To remember this at that inner point of our being where intellect and experience merge is to become that very One. It is to become God. Baba writes, "The universe is a garden for us to roam in with love. It is not intended as a source of attachment, jealousy, hatred or anxiety. These only destroy our equanimity. Give up all desires. If something comes, let it come; if something goes; let it go. It is all Shiva's play. This is not a mere universe; it is the image of Him. Knowing it as Shiva, love it. Meditate on the awareness that all conscious beings as well as inert matter are Shiva. Having the knowledge of Shiva, understand that the world is the embodiment of Him."

Thus, in the two parts of *Secret of the Siddhas*, Baba is first a bhakta, a devotee of God, writing with love and enthusiasm about God's inner kingdom in the tradition of the poet-saints whose works he sings; then he is a philosopher, clarifying and renewing the ancient tradition of Kashmir Shaivism. Together these form the substance of the Siddha tradition, of which Baba's life and thought are a profound example. By presenting these subjects with such clarity and love he makes it possible for us not only to understand them but to absorb them deeply and completely into our lives.

PAUL ZWEIG
New York, 1980

The late Paul Zweig was a celebrated poet, literary critic, biographer and essayist. For many years he was the head of the Department of Comparative Literature at Queens College in New York. His book, Three Journeys, *contains a vivid account of his experience of meeting Swami Muktananda.*

AN APPRECIATION

I am very impressed by *Secret of the Siddhas*. The subject is deep and profound, but Baba has presented it so simply that even an ordinary person can easily understand it. There is clarity in Baba's thoughts, and therefore there is no obscurity in his language and style. One reads the book with great delight.

The Shaivism of Kashmir has not yet been widely disseminated. Generally it is considered to be beyond the understanding of the public, and therefore people have not given it much attention. Therefore, by writing this book, Baba has done a great service. Those who read it will obtain complete knowledge of this great path, and I am sure that in this way the book will help its readers to reach the final goal of all paths.

For this I heartily congratulate Baba and offer him my grateful thanks.

YASHPAL JAIN

Yashpal Jain is the author of numerous books of essays and short stories, as well as the editor of a prominent literary magazine in India. He has received many honours, including the prestigious Padma Shree Award, for his contribution to Hindi literature.

I dedicate this book to the lotus feet of
my supreme father, Sadguru Bhagawan Nityananda,
to whom I owe my existence.

INVOCATION

Because he exists everywhere at all times,
he is called eternal.
Because he is without taint or defect, he is called pure.
He constantly pulsates with bliss in the hearts of all.
This work, *Secret of the Siddhas,* was born
through the inspiration of
Nityananda, the Self of all.

O Lord! Through your grace, even the unintelligent
can understand philosophy.
Through your touch, a seeker has the vision of the Self.
Although you are everywhere, you dwell most specifically
in the heart of a human being.
I have come to know that you alone exist in conscious
beings as well as inert matter.
O Guru! In *Secret of the Siddhas,* you alone dwell
in delight.
You alone permeate all letters, words, and the art of poetry.
Without you, the world does not exist.
Muktananda, know this to be true.

Book I

The Yoga of the Siddhas

1

The Heart of Siddha Yoga

1. Siddha Yoga and meditation on the Self do not oppose any religion, sect, or code of ethics.

2. This meditation revolution does not violate the laws of any government.

3. It is not against any caste or social class.

4. It does not argue with either the good or bad qualities of any country.

5. This meditation revolution is opposed to hatred among people, lack of consideration, ignorance, indolence and falsehood.

6. This Siddha Yoga revolution endeavours to establish industriousness, to bring about oneness on the earth, knowledge, a search for the inner Consciousness, and the attainment of one's own Self.

7. This Siddha Yoga revolution is founded on high principles. It is an invitation to universal brotherhood. Because light, truth and peace exist in all, we should love one another with respect for the Self in all.

8. Siddha Yoga takes no interest in differences. It does not argue about bigotry or cults. In Siddha Yoga there is no room for cultism. Siddha Yoga is the same as it was thousands of years ago at the creation of the universe. Then there were *yogīs* and great sages who had transcended their minds, and Siddha Yoga was born from their arduous *sādhanā* and ultimate perfection. Siddha Yoga is the teaching of those great beings who had fully attained the Truth and who had become one with Paramashiva, the all-pervasive Consciousness and Supreme Guru. This field of knowledge is beyond human ambition, beyond the mind and imagination. It is a venerable path to the realization of Truth. We follow it seeking the supreme love of our own inner Consciousness.

9. The main task of Siddha Yoga is to unfold fully the God-consciousness that lies hidden in all human beings. It culminates in the experience of "I am That" — the experience of our identity with God and in the attainment of our own inner joy. Siddha Yoga destroys our negativities; it removes the dullness and lack of clarity of our minds; and it eradicates the differences among religions, people, and colours. By respecting all, Siddha Yoga dispels the hatred that continually arises in the world.

10. The task of Siddha Yoga is to put an end to the notion of duality — to distinctions of high and low,

superior and inferior, rich and poor — to arguments and disputes, to the racetrack competition among people, and to the futile rushing towards a dream of progress. Siddha Yoga enables one to make the journey through the world with supreme bliss.

11. Siddha Yoga teaches: "May all people everywhere live happily and peacefully. May everyone become free of hatred, jealousy and enmity. May no one see pain, even in a dream." Siddha Yoga is the abode of love for all.

12. In Siddha Yoga we attain the knowledge of our birthright.

13. Siddha Yoga nurtures one who wants the good fortune of revelling in the delightful game of the inner Self. Through it, one attains inner joy and achieves fulfilment in life.

14. Through the pursuit of Siddha Yoga, the inner conscious energy called *kuṇḍalinī* is awakened; yogic movements, or *kriyās*, automatically occur; and this great energy is fully unfolded.

15. A seeker experiences this energy within him as having complete knowledge of all spiritual practices. In the *kriyās* of Siddha Yoga there is no danger.

16. Siddha Yoga affirms that the individual soul is nothing other than the Absolute. There is not the slightest difference between the individual and God.

17. Because the Self identifies itself with the mind, then the senses and the physical body, it is called the experiencer. When it comes in contact with the powers of action,[1] it calls itself the doer; when it comes in contact with the senses of perception, it calls itself the perceiver. Through its attachment to the body, it undergoes birth and death.

18. Through Siddha Yoga, the Self attains the knowledge of its true nature and immortality. It becomes aware, "I am deathless."

19. When the inner energy is awakened through Siddha Yoga, a seeker may immediately experience a surge of extraordinary bliss and ecstasy.

20. In Siddha Yoga, Kundalini is called *cidānandalahari*, the wave of blissful consciousness; *paramānandalahari*, the wave of supreme bliss; or *saccidānanda*, absolute existence, consciousness and bliss.

21. Siddha Yoga regards the philosophical system of Kashmir Shaivism with the highest respect because it makes no distinctions of caste, colour, or nationality. It is open to all.

22. The Self manifests in the form of *aham*, "I", and as material objects in the form of *idam*, "this". Siddha Yoga calls these the perceiver and the perceived.

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1. The powers of speaking, grasping, locomotion, excretion and procreation; also called organs of action.

23. Siddha Yoga reveres the world and takes delight in its evolution. It creates enjoyment of one's household duties and excites interest in one's lifework.

24. Siddha Yoga respects marriage and does not condemn disciplined pleasure.

25. Siddha Yoga avoids all intoxicants, including marijuana, opium, cocaine, hashish and other drugs. They corrupt the mind, destroy the intellect and trouble one's life.

26. Siddha Yoga brings discipline to one's life and strengthens the body through meditation. It brings joy to the heart and makes the eyes sparkle with rays of love.

27. Siddha Yoga exists because of the Siddhas. It makes one swim in the ecstasy of the inner Self.

28. Siddha Yoga highly respects the sacred vows of all *saṃnyāsins* and other great souls who have renounced everything. It respects the fact that they perform actions in the world in a detached manner while seeing Shiva everywhere.

29. Siddha Yoga does not engage in arguments or debates about acceptance and rejection. When there is nothing different from Shiva, what can be accepted or rejected? Siddha Yoga upholds equality.

30. Siddha Yoga considers all castes, religions and sects to be its own and loves everyone with an open heart.

31. Siddha Yoga does not discriminate between men and women, for the One who has become man has also become woman. The one Paramashiva has become two for the purpose of universal sport.

32. Siddha Yoga reveres the mother and father. It honours the Guru and respects all people. Siddha Yoga encourages all the members of a family to live together with respect.

33. Arise and go to bed punctually. Eat and drink at a regular time. Speak in a disciplined manner. Always keep watch over your mind. A pure mind is the means of attaining divinity. This is the teaching of Siddha Yoga.

34. One creates one's own pain and pleasure. Therefore one should be vigilant about one's actions. This is the wisdom of the Siddhas.

35. It is not a sin to lead a family life or to create children. Nor is it a sin to observe vows and discipline, or to earn money in an honourable way. The only sin is to insult one's own Self.

36. Never hate any religion, for all religions are equal. Never hate any castes, for Shiva exists in them all. Never hate the colour of a person's skin, for the same Consciousness dwells in all colours. This is the wisdom of the Siddhas.

37. Sleep is the same for all people no matter what religion they pursue. Similarly, meditation on the Self

is the same for all. Never doubt this. This is the wisdom of the Siddhas.

38. The heart of Siddha Yoga is meditation on one's own Self. Meditate daily on the inner Self according to your capacity. Do it at the same time every day for an hour or an hour and a half.

39. It is good to find a separate place for meditation. You should have a separate set of clothing and a warm blanket. It is also helpful to use incense and other fragrances. All these things are a part of the technique of Siddha Yoga.

40. Never deceive others by teaching *yoga* and meditation when you yourself do not know, contemplate or practise them. To do this is to deceive the Self and to commit a sin.

41. A truly great person completes his *sādhanā*, or spiritual journey. That is his nature. It is also the way of the Siddha Path.

42. It is foolish for one to abandon spiritual practice if one does not meet with immediate success. Siddha Yoga teaches that failure can be a great instrument in the process of evolution.

43. Siddha Yoga does not accept the idea that something is impossible. It declares that there is nothing in the world that is impossible. Bhagiratha brought down the

Ganges from heaven to earth, and it is still flowing today.[2]

44. When the inward-turned and thought-free mind meditates on the Self, love manifests. This is the wisdom of the Siddhas.

45. The Supreme Being dwells in the space of the inner heart. Remember this. This is the teaching of Siddha Yoga.

46. If greed lurks in the heart, that is vice enough for anyone; if one criticizes others, that is sin enough for anyone. But if the mind is pure, how can God be far away? If one possesses virtue, what other qualities does one need? If one has attained Siddha Yoga, of what use are other spiritual practices?

47. It is people who constitute a nation, and spreading the teaching of the equality of all people makes a nation progress. The Siddha Path endeavours to spread this equality-awareness.

48. Siddha Yoga regards the wicked with compassion, for their future is dark. Because of their attitude towards others, they burn within and are reduced to ashes. This fire of negativity is their only enemy, and it pursues them relentlessly. Therefore take pity on them.

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2. According to legend, the great King Bhagiratha managed to divert the holy river Ganges from heaven to earth.

49. Siddha Yoga teaches: "Without love, compassion and peace of mind, a person can never become happy. Without love, even heaven is hell."

50. People say, "Love your friends and hate your enemies." But Siddha Yoga says, "Take pity on your enemies; bless those who abuse and hate you; pray to the Lord for those who hurt you." Then see what delight will be yours. God will come looking for you.

51. If you want love, love all. Respect everyone. Recognize your loving Self in all. This is why in Siddha Yoga we say every day with love and respect, "Welcome to all."

2

Kundalini and Śaktipāta

52. The principal deity of Siddha Yoga is the great Kundalini Shakti, who is also known as Chiti or Supreme Consciousness. She has assumed the form of the entire universe.

53. Kundalini has three specific locations: at the base of the spine, in the heart, and at the crown of the head. She is awakened at the base of the spine and is also activated in the heart, where She manifests as bliss.

54. The creation that we see around us is the visible form of the universal Kundalini. That conscious Kundalini energy is known as the world.

55. Kundalini is regarded as the highest deity. This great Shakti is supremely independent and has limitless power. She becomes the world and then sustains it. At the same time, She remains apart from it. Not only does She manifest in the form of the universe but She also reabsorbs all manifested objects into Herself. This is the experience of Siddha Yoga.

56. Because the great Shakti Kundalini is a mighty power, She is free to perform any action. She brings into existence the entire creation, both seen and unseen. Siddha Yoga has complete understanding of this.

57. Through Her mere thought, the mighty pulsating power of Kundalini can bring into existence even objects that have never been seen. Siddha Yoga states that She could create a flower in the sky, make a barren woman give birth to a son, or manifest horns on a hare.

58. She places limitations on space, time and objects, but She Herself, being all-pervasive and eternal, is not bound by them. She is supremely pure and untouched. For that reason, She is known as Siddha Yogini.

59. Of her own free will, Shakti manifests in this world in the form of the knower, the known and the process of knowing. She is all things both within and without, yet She exists apart from them all. This is why Siddha Yoga declares that She is of the nature of the Absolute.

60. When we speak of Maha Shakti, Parasatta Chiti, Matrika, Gauri, Lakshmi, Saraswati[3] and so on, we are actually referring to that Supreme Shakti Kundalini who is the primordial seed of the universe. Although in reality this Shakti is only one, when She expands She overflows into innumerable currents. All the objects of the universe are Her forms. This is the perfect knowledge of the Siddhas.

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3. Names of the universal creative energy.

61. This Supreme Shakti is not different from all existing things. Her independent power has become fivefold: Her power to give rise to bliss is *ānandaśakti*; Her power of creative will is *icchāśakti*; Her power to illumine is *citśakti*; Her power to understand is *jñānaśakti*; and Her power to manifest all forms is *kriyāśakti*. It is *kriyāśakti* that, through *śaktipāta*, makes a seeker perform various kinds of yogic movements. This is the authentic experience of Siddha Yoga.

62. It is certain that the entire visible universe is the expansion of the sovereign power of mighty Kundalini. Although She exists in many forms, independent Kundalini Shakti vibrates without ceasing, primarily as *icchā, jñāna,* and *kriyā.* She carries out Her work in all beings, whether ignorant or wise. Seeing Her in all, Siddha *yogīs* become overjoyed.

63. A person's desires exist in an unmanifest form in his subconscious mind. Kundalini Shakti knows them through Her power of knowledge and manifests them through Her power of action. Siddha *yogīs* regard this mysterious and extraordinary Kundalini as their beloved deity.

64. Kundalini is a great spiritual power that cannot be detected with mechanical devices. For that reason, until now this has been a secret science. Whoever experiences it must do so with his own conscious body. He then tastes divine bliss and ecstasy. This is the secret of Siddha Yoga.

65. Western scientists have spent billions of dollars inventing machines in an attempt to gain knowledge of nature's subtle workings. They support their discoveries with mathematical calculations. Although their efforts are beneficial to many, in order to experience Kundalini Shakti one must use the instrument of the human body. One also needs the grace of the Guru and the compassion of Kundalini. This is the statement of the Siddhas.

66. The conscious human body, which has been created by God, serves as the instrument as well as the laboratory. It is likely that the scientists of this age will investigate the laws of spiritual power just as they have investigated the laws of nature. That day is not far away. Siddha Yoga is the universal and all-pervasive Supreme Principle.

67. It is very important for a human being to awaken his *kuṇḍalinī*. It is a power, a vibration, an extraordinary energy. It is the soul of an individual and his vital force. It is the conscious power behind the senses. It is that which inspires the intellect and makes the mind contemplate. Siddha Yoga teaches that this entire universe is pervaded by the great Shakti.

68. The individual soul dwells in the heart. In the heart there are one hundred *nāḍīs*, or subtle channels. From each of these *nāḍīs* one hundred other *nāḍīs* branch out. Seventy-two additional *nāḍīs* stem from each of these. And again, each of these *nāḍīs* has one thousand offshoots. In total, there are seven hundred and twenty

million *nāḍīs* through which the particular *prāṇa*[4] known as *vyāna* circulates. Kundalini, along with the *prāṇa*, pervades the body. Siddha Yoga accepts this statement from the *Praśnopaniṣad.*

69. Among all these *nāḍīs*, seventy-two thousand are important. Of these, one hundred are principal. And of these, three are particularly significant. Of these three, the most important is the *suṣumnā*, which extends from the base of the spine to the crown of the head. The records of all the *karmas* of countless lifetimes are stored in the *suṣumnānāḍī*.

70. Shakti dwells at the base of the spine in the spiritual centre called the *mūlādhāra*, and Shiva at the crown of the head in the centre called the *sahasrāra*. The *suṣumnā* extends from one to the other. The awakened Shakti rises from the base of the spine and unites with Shiva.[5] This union brings perfection. The state of Siddhahood arises from this.

71. *Śaktipāta*, or the awakening of Kundalini, can occur in many different ways — through chanting, meditation, *mantra* repetition, *haṭhayoga* postures, *bandhas*, *mudrās* and other practices. Using these methods, a seeker has to struggle a great deal, and sometimes the results may be dangerous. Siddha *yogīs* have the experience that it is easier to awaken the Shakti through the Guru's grace. This method is completely beneficial.

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4. Life force or vital energy. In the body it takes five forms to perform five major functions: *prāṇa*, inhalation; *apāna*, exhalation; *vyāna*, pervasion; *udāna*, ascension; *samāna*, equalisation.

5. The all-pervasive Supreme Consciousness or Ultimate Reality.

72. The initiation performed by the Guru takes place easily and simply. The Siddhas state that when the Guru sows the seed of Shakti, the seed develops very naturally into a tree with flowers and fruit.

73. In *śaktipāta*, the Shakti flows from one person to another either with or without the physical touch. The Shakti flows through the *nāḍīs* inside the body. When *śaktipāta* takes place, the Shakti permeates the entire body, creating a sensation similar to the heat of fire. This is experienced in Siddha Yoga.

74. Because the Shakti is subtler than the subtlest, some people may not be aware of it during the initial stages of practice. Others experience it immediately. Some perceive it as a flash of lightning. This light can be seen moving inside as well as outside the body. This is the experience of Siddha students.

75. A seeker also experiences the fact that the Shakti can be drawn into the body from different sources, such as the sun, clouds, fire, lightning, air and ether. All objects are suffused with God's power. After the inner Shakti is awakened, a *yogī* through his will can draw the Shakti into his body from outside. That Shakti enters him and functions consciously. This is the experience of the Siddhas.

76. Unless Kundalini is awakened, a human being cannot evolve. Everyone is entitled to this – a child, an elderly person, a man and a woman. The great Kundalini Shakti exists equally in all, so Siddha Yoga considers everyone fit for Her awakening.

77. The awakening of Kundalini is called initiation. It happens specifically at three different levels: *āṇavi, śakti* and *śāmbhavī*.[6] It can occur through look, speech or touch. In Siddha Yoga, the Guru can give initiation by staring fixedly at another person, by uttering the great *mantra* into his ear, or by touching him with the hand.

78. Through the will of the Guru, *śaktipāta* can also be given mentally. *Śaktipāta* can occur through the will of one who desires to give it. The one who wishes to receive Shakti should have love, devotion, steadfast faith in the Self and the desire to attain it. This is the law of Siddha Yoga.

79. When *śaktipāta* takes place, some people experience it instantly in the form of visions of light, heaviness of the body, intoxication, bodily tremors, sweating, shivers of joy and so on. These are the first signs of Siddha Yoga.

80. When the Shakti is awakened, various yogic movements take place. A person may utter different sounds. He may experience ecstasy, agitation, negativity, apathy, fear, loss of faith, and other feelings. These can happen in the initial stage of Siddha Yoga.

81. According to a person's temperament, he may receive *śaktipāta* in any one of twenty-seven different

6. Three levels of initiation by the Guru, depending on the evolvement of the seeker. *Āṇavi* is initiation into mechanical and ritualistic practices; *śakti* is initiation into subtle and psychological practices; *śāmbhavī* is direct transmission of the state of Shiva, or Self-realization.

strengths. This is the teaching of Kashmir Shaivism. How a person receives it depends on his past actions, the actions that he is performing in this body, and his tendencies. This is the statement of the Siddhas.

82. Following *śaktipāta*, not everyone experiences the same *kriyās*. But though the *kriyās* may differ due to people's temperaments, the final experience is the same for everyone. There is only one experience of perfection. This is the conviction of all the Siddhas.

83. In a human being there are four bodies, one within the other: physical, subtle, causal and supracausal.[7] As the Shakti works in all four bodies, She gives rise to various amazing experiences. This is the knowledge of the Siddhas.

84. It is a philosophical premise that the microcosm is identical to the macrocosm. The great Shakti, the mother of the world, lives in the body as the microcosm. The entire universe exists in the seed of the heart, the inner Self.

85. In the heart there is a sublime and miraculous centre. When the work of Kundalini begins there through the grace of a Siddha, a person can perceive distant objects and sounds. He acquires the knowledge of higher planes, of past lives, and of others' minds.

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7. The physical body is experienced in the waking state. The subtle body (which includes mind, senses, and other subtle instruments) is the vehicle for the dream state. The causal body is experienced in deep sleep as blissful non-awareness. The supracausal body is made of pure Consciousness; it is the body of transcendental experience.

86. Initiation, or Kundalini awakening, gives a person complete knowledge. In the final stage of meditation, the awareness of *so 'ham*[8] and "I am perfect" arises spontaneously within. It happens because the awakened Shakti is the embodiment of perfect knowledge. This is the indisputable experience of the Siddhas.

87. A simple and powerful means of deepening meditation is to focus the mind on those great beings who are beyond attachment. Then meditation progresses very quickly. This is the remarkable effect of remembering the Siddhas.

88. There is no doubt that the sublime and divine Shakti dwells in every human being. Even if one cannot meditate deeply on one's own, by receiving Shakti from the Guru one will automatically experience all yogic *kriyās*. This is the wisdom of the Siddhas.

89. The mighty Kundalini Shakti is the vital force. As fire, She gives heat; as the sun, She gives light; as rain, She brings showers; as wind, She blows everywhere. She is the earth. She exists in the form of all material objects.

90. No words can describe Her. She is a woman; She is a man. She is everything in the world. She is that that exists and that that does not exist.

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8. Literally, "I am He" or "I am That".

3

The Inner Experience

91. Keep searching within. Plunge deeper and deeper into the realm of the heart. See the blissful effulgence there, beautiful and shimmering in various unique colours. Within the heart, in the space where the inhalation merges, perceive the thought-free state of love. Watch the play of the *mātṛkāśakti*, the subtle vibrations that arise as thoughts and feelings and then subside back into the space of the heart. Then you will know that Siddha Yoga is within you.

92. Keep observing carefully where the inner fivefold actions[9] continue to arise and where they dissolve. Keep watching the petals of the heart lotus; observe how desire, greed, delusion, jealousy, enmity, arrogance and envy form and dissolve in each petal. Where do they arise and subside? Why does this happen? Siddha Yoga concentrates on this inner understanding.

9. Activity of the individual's thoughts as they are created, sustained, dissolved, concealed in a seed form (stored as memory), or totally annihilated. Kashmir Shaivism teaches that this process parallels the cosmic process of creation, sustenance, etc.

93. Have you discovered where the inhalation goes when it merges in the heart? Who expels it in the form of the exhalation? Where does it merge outside? Who draws it in again? Siddha Yoga guides your attention to that.

94. Notice where the waves of feeling arise in the heart. Where does this infinite inner creation dissolve? Watch the miracle of the ever-new waves of this vast creation. These waves perpetually arise and subside. Siddha Yoga focuses your attention on this.

95. You have seen movies, disco, rock-and-roll, different resorts, clubs, fancy hotels and parties. These things are alright; they are simply the products of the *śakti* of those who are interested in them. But you have not seen where your awareness goes during deep sleep or through whose instigation you awaken. O friend, Siddha Yoga compels you to see that.

96. Observe something else with subtle understanding. Although you are asleep, who is awake within? That witness takes no rest and is inseparably one with your life. While remaining different from you, That watches everything occurring in your waking state as though it were a dream. Siddha Yoga inspires you to see That.

97. Plunge a little deeper. After seeing the infinite miracles of the heart, enter the supracausal body. Behold the vast centre that is thought-free, blissful and effulgent. How intriguing and beautiful it is, how perfectly smooth and even. In that space there is light and nothing but light. Siddha Yoga calls it the bliss of *turīyā*, the transcendental state.

98. Keep observing. As you continue to watch, the seer disappears. For a few seconds your existence is erased, just as a grain of salt dissolves and becomes water. But have no fear—on reaching that state, you become eternally serene and unmoved. Then there is nothing but boundless ecstasy. Know that the Siddhas live there.

99. That is the ocean of love. Like a wave, you drown in the ocean of bliss and become the ocean. Again and again you arise and subside like a bubble in the ocean of love. Ah, what ecstasy! Ah, what sublime and exquisite bliss! What perfect peace and love! What independent contentment! That is the abode of the Siddhas.

100. That is the centre of the ecstatic beings. Its love is the true life. The individual derives his existence from it. The entire world dissolves in the ocean of love, then arises from it once again. That is the dwelling place of the ecstatic beings. If you seek the Siddhas, know that you will find them there.

101. After entering within, slowly go higher. Slowly—there is no need to hurry. As you rise higher, rest awhile in the space between the eyebrows. That is the passport office of the Guru. With love, devotion and humility, get your visa there. Look: if you have any ego, throw it away like a worn-out shoe. Otherwise this visa will be very difficult for you to obtain. Only through the grace of the Siddhas can it be acquired.

102. After obtaining your visa, slowly and carefully proceed further. You will reach the divine world of the

sahasrāra, which is composed of one thousand centres, each more sublime than the last. It is enchanting and infinitely beautiful. Each centre embodies a different kind of understanding and knowledge. Siddha students have a picnic there.

103. In the vast, exquisite space of the *sahasrāra* you will see the divine effulgence of a thousand blazing suns. Its beauty is utterly enchanting. This cool, divine light creates no heat. In it there are neither moon nor stars. This divine effulgence is the perfect image of supreme bliss. This is the statement of the great Siddhas.

104. In the *sahasrāra* there is no heat of either fire or the sun. There is no coolness of the moon. Neither pain nor death can reach there. It is eternally suffused with bliss. Reaching there, *yogīs* merge with that bliss. It is their true abode. Siddha Yoga affirms this.

105. It is also called the space of wisdom. It manipulates the entire body and is the centre of all the *nāḍīs*. The yogic scriptures compare it to a thousand-petalled lotus. The centre of that lotus is the abode of Lord Shiva. When Siddha *yogīs* reach that space, they obtain undying awareness of Shiva.

106. In the centre of the *sahasrāra* is the Blue Pearl, an exquisite, tiny blue light. Its effulgence is enchanting. Ah, who can describe its beauty? How can one understand its divinity? Although it is just a dot, this tiny light contains the entire universe. It is the form of the Supreme within us. The Siddhas call it the seed of the heart.

107. A *yogī's* meditation stabilizes in it. When he sees it, his entire body grows cold, his mind becomes silent, and for a few moments the movement of his vital force ceases. He loses himself in meditation.

108. When the Supreme Lord within becomes pleased with a *yogī*, the Guru's compassionate glance descends on him. At that time, the Blue Pearl emerges from his eyes and manifests before him. As it stands before him, his good fortune blossoms. The Blue Pearl expands and permeates the entire cosmos. Having the vision of its pervasion of the universe, a *yogī* becomes worthy of the title, Siddha.

109. Compared with the expansion of the Blue Pearl, the universe appears to be as tiny as a dot. When the Blue Pearl expands in this way, an extraordinary Blue Being manifests from its centre. He has a form of the utmost beauty, but it is not composed of the gross elements. Tukaram Maharaj, a Siddha, said, "That form is the embodiment of Consciousness." The Siddhas proclaim that the Blue Lord pervades all three worlds.

110. That being, the embodiment of Consciousness, is made of extraordinary light – blue, red, and all the colours of the morning sun. He is a miraculous, radiant being. In meditation, He stands directly before the *yogī*. There are no words to describe His beauty. Jnanadeva, a supreme Guru among Siddhas, called Him the light of Consciousness.

111. The Blue Being is the radiance of the perfect knowledge of divine realization. A vision of Him is considered

to be the realization of the form of God. Although the Blue Being has a form, He is actually formless. This is the experience of the Siddhas.

'112. He has created the universe, pervaded it and assumed its form. He stands quietly for several seconds before a lover of the Guru. He walks around the meditating *yogī* and utters a few words. These words brim with sweetness and mystery. At this point the *yogī* is very near the state of Siddhahood.

113. The mighty One, the Blue Lord, the Sovereign of Consciousness, stands before the *yogī* who has received the Guru's grace and utters these words: "I have eyes in all My limbs. I can see every atom of the universe. All My limbs — My hands, legs and head — as well as every pore of My body can speak." In this way, He addresses the Siddha *yogī* for a few moments.

114. That which Kashmir Shaivism refers to as the Supreme Pulsation, Consciousness, or the mighty Shakti, is the one who utters these secret words. Just as Consciousness expands, pervades the entire universe, and once again contracts, similarly the Blue Being, Consciousness, the Great Light, once again becomes the Blue Pearl, as tiny as a sesame seed, and re-enters the body through the eyes. It lives eternally in the *sahasrāra*. The great *kuṇḍalinī yogī* now becomes established in the seat of Siddhahood.

115. At this point, the *yogī's* understanding changes and he is totally transformed. With his own eyes, he fully

perceives the Truth. As he ponders his realization again and again, his hair stands on end, his eyes brim with tears, sweat pours from him, and his body trembles. Becoming ecstatic and intoxicated with love, he is firmly established in Siddhahood.

116. Then he spontaneously obtains complete knowledge of the formless. Just as in the state of ignorance he used to say, "I am the body," now he very naturally knows, "I am perfect." As a matter of course, he experiences perfection everywhere. He is filled with love. He considers the world to be the expansion of his own Self. He is aware that he is in the world and the world is in him. He experiences oneness. This is the perfect attainment of the Siddha *yogī*.

4

Nityananda

117. After the realization of the form of God, the *yogī* very naturally becomes established in formlessness. Wherever he may go, he finds only his Self. He does not have to become angry with the world. He neither scoffs at worldly pleasures, nor takes any interest in them. For him, the world is entertainment, like watching a movie.

118. After realization, some beings remain ecstatic. They live in our world, but no matter where or in what condition they are, the world appears different to them than it does to us. For them, the world has become heaven because they see it in the divine light of Consciousness. "The world is as you see it"[10] — this is the wisdom of the Siddhas.

119. Siddhas are supremely independent. They are totally immersed in God at all times. Their state and behaviour are strange. Some look outwardly foolish although they are inwardly intelligent; others are scholarly and give

10. The philosophy of the sage Vasishtha as expressed in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*.

birth to the literature of Truth; some appear to be crazy. This is the way of the Siddhas.

120. Even though some live like kings, they are flawless in renunciation, discrimination and detachment. They are free of expectations. Although they live like kings, their Siddhahood is perfect. Their position is due to fortune and destiny. It is given by God.

121. O my Bhagawan Nityananda, you were a great renunciant. Although countless objects used to be around you, you neither touched them with your hands nor even cast your eyes on them. You lived in a solitary place, in a jungle where once there was not even a means of access. Now it has become a shrine. This is the destiny of Siddhas.

122. O Bhagawan Nityananda, you were a supreme *avadhūta*.[11] You wore only a loincloth, but you were born a Siddha. In your younger days you served a great ascetic, just as Shri Krishna, who was the Absolute made manifest, spent some time serving Sandipani. The great beings do such things in order to teach people. This is the wisdom of the Siddhas.

123. O Nityananda, you were the crown jewel of all *avadhūtas*. You knew the past, present and future. Even if you spoke only one word, it never went to waste. You were the image of renunciation. You were always utterly ecstatic within yourself. To remain ecstatic within is the state of the Siddhas.

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11. A realized being who remains above body-consciousness.

124. O Nityananda, you were perpetually bathed in bliss. Your name itself was bliss. When you laughed, joy and ecstasy burst forth from every pore of your body, as if your skin ripped open with the sudden outrush of your joy. You always spoke aphoristically. Although you might utter one brief word, it would contain as much meaning as a lengthy discourse. Sometimes you would remain silent for two or three days at a time. This is the extraordinary way of the Siddhas.

125. O Nityananda, Lord of *avadhūtas*, you had a dark body. Your belly was enlarged by the spontaneous retention of your breath.[12] Although your eyes looked outward, your gaze was directed within. Your eyes were half-closed and shone like the morning sun. A smile always played upon your lips. Your hands were large and generous. When you walked, your gait was like that of an intoxicated elephant. You were a Siddha who stole everyone's mind.

126. Sometimes when you closed your eyes, it would take you an hour or two to open them. Enjoying the natural state of a Siddha, at times you would sleep for hours on end, immersed in the ecstasy of your own Self. Although thousands of people came to see you, there was no noise; the atmosphere was hushed. You did not have to give lectures. Merely by seeing you, people would be consoled. You were the Lord of Siddhas.

127. O Nityananda, you used to say, "The Self is the Supreme Truth. There is nothing more sublime than

12. A yogic practice called *kumbhaka*, performed for achieving a thought-free state of mind. In its spontaneous manifestation as described here, it implies prolonged absorption in the thought-free state and the retention of great power in the *yogī*.

the Self. Hey! The Self is within. Turn within." In this way you taught with just a few words. For you, within and without were the same. You always dwelt within. What a great Siddha you were!

128. O Nityananda, your words were *mantras*, your speech was scripture. Your behaviour embodied the teachings of *yoga*. The place where you lived was immaculate; it always looked freshly scrubbed no matter how many thousands of people came to see you.

129. O Shri Gurudev, in you one could see that the sublime *śaivīkhecarīmudrā* of Shaivism had taken up residence. Lord Shiva described this *śaivimudrā*, this pure *khecarī* that is the state of Shiva. He said that the eyes remain fixed and unblinking but see nothing. Although they appear to look outward, the gaze is directed within. The mind is quiet, not dwelling on any thought, and the vital force is still but not forcibly retained. O Nityananda, you lived in this sublime *mudrā* of the Siddhas.

130. The human body is made of seven components,[13] but in a *siddha* these elements have been consumed in the fire of *kuṇḍalinī* meditation. A new *rasa*, or bodily fluid, has been created. It is the embodiment of Consciousness and bliss. Because of it, the body of a Siddha is suffused with the sweetness of love.

131. The sublime sweetness of Kundalini plays throughout the entire body of a great being. In ecstasy, he is one with the perfect bliss of the Absolute. In his company,

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13. Lymphatic fluid, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and sexual fluid.

people naturally experience joy. O Nityananda, thousands of people sat in silence before you. Everyone was intoxicated. Wherever a great Siddha dwells, the atmosphere is permeated with serenity and love.

132. O Gurudev, you are still at work even though you are no longer in your physical body. In your inner, conscious body, you appear to many people. I have received numerous letters from individuals saying, "Nityananda Baba told me this or that." Siddhahood is ancient, eternal and true.

133. O Bhagawan Nityananda, you are everywhere; I have utter faith in this. O my Gurudev, you are in the light of the sun, in the coolness of the moon, in the gusts of wind. In the heavens you shine as the twinkling of the stars. O Great Siddha Nityananda, with devotion, complete knowledge and understanding, one can see that you are manifest even though you appear to be concealed.

134. Human beings suffer only because they lack understanding. The great being Eknath spoke from the highest level of understanding when he said, "I will lead my life with great joy. I will fill all three worlds with bliss." O Nityananda, you fill the entire universe. As another Siddha *yogī*, Vasuguptacharya, said, "The pulsation of the cosmos is the mighty Shakti of the Guru."

135. With firm understanding and truthfulness I say, "O Nityananda, you are before me, behind me, on either side of me and below me. It is you who give and you who receive." Vasugupta said that the world

is a play of Consciousness. The world is a play of the essence of Nityananda.

136. The great saint Jnaneshwar Maharaj said, "O Gurunath, when you conceal yourself from someone, he sees this world as full of various strange and separate things. But when you reveal yourself, you and you alone remain. The world ceases to exist for him." In the same way, O Shri Guru Nityananda, when a person forgets you, he perceives the play of the world. When he remembers you, the world becomes the embodiment of you. This is the statement of the Siddhas.

137. O man, give up the weakness of your delusion and sense of duality. Make your heart pure. Enter completely within and see that it is Nityananda who pervades the world. Vasugupta asked, "What place or object lacks Consciousness?" What time is there without Nityananda?

138. O friend, improve yourself. Purify yourself. In the fire of meditation, wash the dirt from the mirror of your intellect. Sadguru Nityananda dwells in a pure heart and a clean mind. This is the wisdom of the Siddhas.

139. How can you forget the Truth? Why do you value falsehood so highly and then pay the price you yourself have created? Open your eyes. Whatever you may do, do it for your inner Nityananda. Become alert. Change the prescription of your glasses. Then look and you will see only Nityananda. This is what the Siddha *yogīs* have told you. This is the teaching of Siddha Yoga.

5

The Lords of Equality

140. These days in the spiritual field there are mar writers, lecturers, so-called great beings, and peop who call themselves God. There are people who clai to be Siddhas yet change their names again and agai It is very likely that some bound souls are hidi among the Siddhas. Their ageless ignorance gives ri to jealousy and this in turn creates duality and t desire to see others' faults. But a true Siddha avoi such destructive action.

141. Someone once wrote in an article, "Muktanan is not yet perfect." I said, "That's fine. Perhaps I ha had wrong understanding of myself and he is ve kindly pointing it out to me. But one thing surpri me. Where did he get the meter to determine thi Bhagawan Nityananda never liked to criticize a religion, sect or person. If anyone found fault wi someone else, he would say, "Hey! You have faul vision. Ram is in all." This is the sign of a supre Siddha.

142. In the great epic, the *Mahābhārata*, a dialogue tal place between two people, one evil and one good. L

Krishna asks the virtuous Dharmaraja, "Can you point out a sinner or a wicked person in this crowd?" Dharmaraja replies, "No, no! Here there are only good people." Then Krishna asks the wicked Duryodhana, "Can you point out a good person in this gathering?" Duryodhana says, "They're all sinners. There is not a single good person here." So you see, one's vision creates one's world. To a Siddha's vision, all are equal. A Siddha has risen above criticizing others.

143. In the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* it is said, "The world is as you see it." You create your own experience according to your perception. A Siddha sees the world according to his own vision, and a bound person does the same. Kashmir Shaivism says that all beings are equal. Equal vision is the means of attaining Siddhahood.

144. Suppose that the question were asked, "What is the meaning of *da*?" One person might say, "*Da* means *dambha*, pretension." A second person might say, "*Da* means *dāridrya*, poverty of understanding." A third might say, "*Da* means *da da*, the way a farmer calls a bull; so *da* might refer to a bull." These people's interpretations would indicate their capacity and attainment. But God's loving look permeates the eyes of Siddhas, so they see only good even in defects.

145. Many are the ways of Siddhas. I knew a great Siddha, Zipruanna, who was always naked. He would lie on a heap of rubbish. He ate whatever passers-by gave him. Although he sat surrounded by filth, he was never affected by it. He saw only equality everywhere. He was always

happy. Although he was in the body, he knew that he was totally different from it. He was an ecstatic Siddha.

146. Zipruanna was omniscient. He had full knowledge of both past and future. He spoke in Marathi and his speech was simple and straightforward. In his village he always roamed wherever and whenever he liked. If anyone spoke to him, he would reply with only a few words. He was always ecstatic within himself. There were a large number of Hindus and Muslims in his village and both groups respected him greatly. One has to be supremely fortunate to meet such a Siddha.

147. There was another great being called Ranga Avadhut whom I used to visit now and then. He was a great scholar and came to our *āśrama* twice. He lived on the banks of the holy Narmada River and would bathe three times each day. He always travelled on foot. He would never sit in a car, but occasionally he would ride in a horse carriage. He was a great Siddha.

148. People used to look upon Ranga Avadhut as a divine incarnation. He wore a loincloth and often carried a long stick. He ate simple, light food. He spoke very little and in plain, straightforward language. He was so completely free of pride and ego that he had become love incarnate. He used to meet people punctually. He listened to others' questions about their pains and pleasures and gave them advice. I loved him very much. He was such a great Siddha that people considered him the incarnation of Guru Dattatreya.[14]

14. An incarnation of Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra, the Hindu trinity of creation, sustenance and destruction combined in one form.

149. I met another saint called Ranchod Bapuji, who also visited our *āśrama* once. He did a great deal of work among the needy. Wherever there was famine, he would rush to assist the starving villagers by giving them food, water and clothing. He was also a great Siddha.

150. Bapuji was omniscient. He, too, ate very simple, light food. He was a great renunciant and very loving and powerful. He removed the pain and poverty of many. Enormous crowds of thousands of people used to gather around him. Sometimes he would disappear for days on end and no one would know where he had gone. Suddenly he would reappear in the midst of the people. His behaviour was extraordinary. He was incomparably secretive. It is impossible to truly describe him. Such rare Siddhas occasionally manifest in the world.

151. Siddharudha was another great being. He lived in Hubli, a large city in Karnataka. All who came to him were given food. No one remained hungry. Then, as well as now, his entire *āśrama* continually reverberated with the chanting of *oṃ namaḥ śivāya*. People used to consider him the incarnation of Shiva. He was one of the great Siddhas.

152. In Siddharudha's *āśrama, satsaṅga* was held both in the morning and in the evening. Scriptural discussions were always going on. Great scholars and philosophers lived there and received Siddharudha's grace. In fact, all the religious people of the area used to gather there. They referred to his abode as Kailasa.[15] Even a fortunate person only rarely sees such a great Siddha.

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15. Heavenly abode of Lord Shiva.

153. There was another saint called Hari Giri Baba. I spent a good deal of time with him, too. He lived like a gentleman. He wore a turban of expensive silk with a gold border, an elegant coat and costly shoes. He always roamed here and there, even at night. If anyone invited him for a meal, he would eat and then leave. His state was exceedingly strange. He talked to himself, and his speech was odd. He was also a great Siddha *yogī*.

154. Most of the time, Hari Giri wandered around a dry river bed. He would select tiny pebbles, talk to them and stuff his pockets with them. Sometimes he would gaze off into the distance and scold. Occasionally he would talk to the wind. His was a curious state. Whenever I went through difficult times during my *sādhanā*, he would visit me. He would help me understand something and then leave immediately. He was a Siddha who knew the past, present and future.

155. Sai Baba of Shirdi was also great. He satisfied his hunger with the alms he received daily. He was fond of listening to music. At any time, he could give people fistfuls of money from his empty pockets. He wore a long, plain robe, and a scarf around his head. He was a great Siddha.

156. Sai Baba was worshipped by everyone—the rich as well as the poor. If someone gave him a gift, he would give it to anyone who happened to be there. He had no desire for possessions. He was supremely compassionate and eased the pain and suffering of the poor.

His influence is still felt throughout the world. People had absolute faith in his greatness. When he shed his body, he told people, "Now the stone of my Samadhi Shrine will respond to you." Since then, Shirdi has become a magnificent and holy place. There is a constant stream of visitors from near and far. Facilities have been provided so that many people can stay there. It has become a great Siddha shrine.

157. Once again, I am reminded of Bhagawan Nityananda. To remember him is more than enough for my small life. At least I knew him. What greater fortune than that could there be? Kabir, the great poet-saint, said, "One fragrant champa blossom is better than a stack of dry grass." In the same way, the Siddhahood of Bhagawan Nityananda was sufficient for me.

158. One day in Nityananda's presence, I referred to someone as a crook. Immediately Gurudev said, "Hey, Muktananda! Is there really any crooked person in this world? It is just the crookedness of your cleverness. Everything is the pervasion of the Supreme Truth. God has created the play of the world for His own pleasure. No one in the world is crooked." Ah, how perfect he was. What Siddhahood!

159. He continued, "O Muktananda! You are seeing with petty understanding. With this kind of awareness, you are heading in the wrong direction. Change your outlook. Correct your understanding. Then see that the world is just a play, an entertaining movie. It is neither true nor false. Know this secret. Only then will you

attain something." What a great teaching that was, and how absolutely true. What divine wisdom of the Self. This is the teaching of the compassionate Siddha Guru.

160. Nityananda taught: "All religions belong to the One. All sects are formed for Him alone. Nevertheless, through their own inspiration, the people who found sects give many forms to that One. No matter how many ornaments one makes, they all come from the same gold." Gurudev's teachings were sublime and true. The Siddhas are the lords of equality.

161. Since I loved Shiva, I also loved to worship the *śiva-liṅgam*. I had faith that if God exists in all, then the *liṅgam* must also be a perfect manifestation of Him. One day as I was returning from worshipping the *liṅgam*, Nityananda asked me, "What were you doing?" I replied, "Bathing Rudra." Gurudev laughed and said, "The one you are worshipping is also within you. In fact, He gives you the power to do it. Worship Him through meditation. Meditation is worship; meditation is a ritual bath. Attain Him through meditation." What true understanding. He opened the gate of heaven for me. This is how the teachings of the Siddhas are.

162. I am reminded of Tulsidas, another great being, who said, "Keep the company of enlightened Gurus with great humility, with unaffected love and without ego. Just as the sun dispels darkness, the Guru banishes ignorance." This is absolutely true. Without the aid of a Siddha, one cannot easily sail across the ocean of the world.

163. If a person with a taintless heart and a vigilant and pure mind keeps the company of a Siddha just for a moment, half a moment, or even half of that, he can instantly go across the ocean of mundane existence. How wonderful Gurudev's teachings were! His words were a lotion that removed blindness. Only by becoming a fish can one know how a fish lives. To understand a great being, one first has to become one with him. That is true knowledge.

164. My Gurudev spoke very seldom — sometimes every few hours, sometimes once a day, or once every several days. Occasionally he would speak only once every three months or every six months. Then again he might not speak for nine months at a time. However, when Nityananda spoke even for ten minutes, it was more than enough for my entire life. I can now pass on his words to the whole world. A handful of the words of a Siddha contain great power and blaze with Shakti.

165. I do not attach much importance to the statement of people who say that they have become Siddhas without the grace of another Siddha, or that they are the highest God of all, or that they hold the loftiest position. These statements show that they have not yet reached that state. The gracious glance of a Siddha is priceless. I am alive because of it.

166. The entire creation as well as all philosophies and all knowledge are contained within Gurudev's glance. In his vision, the world is sustained as the world. I honour that gracious glance. It is sufficient for me.

What joy, what ecstasy and love it contains! I embrace that ecstasy and immerse myself blissfully in the love of the Siddhas.

167. Let those with the tendency to differentiate measure what is high and what is low as if they were in a grocery store. I do not want that. My only desire is to experience Nityananda's love in everyone, to experience equality everywhere, to become a true lover in order to taste again and again the love of my Gurudev, who is established in the awareness of the Self of all. May I bow my head before such Siddhas. May I offer my ego at the Siddhas' feet.

6

The City of Love

168. What is the state of an ecstatic being? To be happy within himself, to speak to his friends about this ecstasy, to open his heart to his companions about this knowledge with joy, peace and love. O friend, selfish knowledge, or even the pursuit of Siddhahood and spirituality, are joyless *sādhanā* when love is missing. I do not want that. Love, happiness and ecstasy dwell among the Siddhas.

169. Love is the supreme attainment. Without love, everything is useless. The world manifests through the power of God's love, it is sustained by love, and it will ultimately merge into love. That love throbs within us at all times. Siddha Yoga is the attainment of love. It is becoming anchored in love.

170. There is boundless love within. It is supremely true. We inhale and exhale because of its pulsation. The *prāṇā* circulates throughout the body due to the throb of love. It is love that has given the eyes the ability to perceive forms. This independent love is eternal bliss. It is the abode of the Siddhas.

171. Through love in the form of fire, all that we eat and drink is digested in the stomach.[16] Through love, that digested food is converted into blood and distributed throughout the body. All the bodily functions are motivated by love. Love enraptures the Siddhas. It is their attainment.

172. A human being cannot live without inner love. The Self is called *saccidānanda*—absolute existence, consciousness and bliss. It is the Supreme Truth. To attain love, we have to turn within. By doing this, we discover the vastness of love. The Siddhas dwell in this city of love.

173. In the *Śrimadbhāgavatam* there is a saying: "The real path is that which is trodden by the great beings." Love, that supreme and eternal bliss, was the path trodden by the great beings, sages, and souls who saw equality everywhere. It was through this path that they found the object of their search. Love is the seat of the Siddhas.

174. The awareness of equality is the highest attainment. Human beings are troubled by duality and a sense of differences. Disparity exists because of delusion, anger, attachment and ignorance. When we keep the company of great beings, duality turns into unity and disparity into equality. When we have this understanding, we become worthy of receiving the grace of a Siddha. Then we obtain the ocean of love.

175. Nityananda had attained the supreme state. It was extraordinary. He lived in the ecstasy of natural

16. According to yogic doctrine, the process of digestion takes place because of a "gastric fire".

samādhi.[17] He maintained that state at every moment. He was intoxicated with love. Wherever he went, he walked around God. The movements of his body were his worship of God. His sleep was the divine state of *samādhi*. He was absorbed in his own Self, and that absorption was the worship of all. The Siddhas' state is beyond mind and speech.

176. Whatever Nityananda said was equivalent to a Vedic *mantra*. For him, both a house and a desert were pleasant resting places. For him, eating and drinking were sublime acts of worship. He did not have to close his eyes, plug his ears or practise any strenuous techniques. With his open eyes, he saw the true beauty of this world of forms.

177. Because he was absorbed in his inner divinity, base desire could never approach him. Whether he was standing or sitting, his natural *samādhi* was never disturbed. Such was his state. This state is called *unmanī*, the state beyond the mind. It transcends the body, mind and speech. How can one write about it? This supreme state transcends body-consciousness. Pain and pleasure cannot touch it. A Siddha, who is anchored in this state, has become one with his own Self. To compare such a Siddha with God is a small matter.

178. Because Nityananda was immersed in the ecstasy of inner love, he spoke little. There was no need for him to speak. If someone owns a jewel case full of diamonds, why should he have to open it again and again? If a swan reaches Manasa Lake on Mount Kailasa, why

17. The superconscious state of God-realization.

should it return to ordinary rivers and streams? When a person has become the all-pervasive Consciousness, why should he open his eyes and look outside? If a person watched Nityananda with love even for a few moments, he became like him. Very few such Siddhas come into the world.

179. In Pandharpur I met a great being called Bapumayi. He would wake up in the morning and take about a four-mile walk through Pandharpur. He used to wear a loincloth and another small cloth to cover his body. He carried a bundle of three sticks over his shoulder. When he walked down the road, the shopkeepers would give him money. Within two hours his fists would be full of money. He would take it to the cremation ground where he lived. To him this place was a palace.

Once I followed him. As he left the city on his way to the cremation ground, he suddenly looked back. "Why are you following me?" he asked.

I replied, "I want to come to your home."

"Hey, you're a nice man," he said, "I belong to a low caste and live in a cremation ground. You shouldn't come with me."

I insisted, "You are much better than I am. In my eyes, you belong to the highest class. I want to go with you."

He walked off and I followed him until we finally reached the cremation ground. The holy river Chandrabhaga flows by that place. He stood before the river and addressed it: "O Mother, keep this money with you." He threw the money into the water, saying, "I have no place to keep it. You take care of it." Then he sat peacefully under a tree in the cremation ground. I prostrated fully before him, touched his feet, and sat down.

He said, "I belong to a low caste. You are a *saṃnyāsīn*, Narayana Himself.[18] It's not good for you to commit the sin of bowing to me."

I protested, "Bapumayiji, I know myself very well, and I know you, too. I have come here greedy for some real nourishment. If you would be less miserly, I would be more fortunate."

He said, "Go to the temple and see the statue of Vitthal." "I've done all that," I replied. "Now I'm sitting right before the moving, speaking Vitthal."

"I feel that I am the lowest of all," he said. "Don't you feel ashamed being here with me?" Then he added softly, "O Swami, everything is the embodiment of God. There is nothing else. The Lord is above, below, to the left and right. You are that God. There is nothing else but Him. Chant His name with great ecstasy. Now go."

I said, "Come with me to Yeola."

"No, no," he answered. "Why should I leave this heaven and go somewhere else?" By this time it was midnight. "Now leave. Wherever you go, I am with you. Go to your own heaven, Ganeshpuri." Then he said something else. I became ecstatic and slept in the cremation ground. I had arrived in the town only that evening, and already I had met such a great Siddha.

180. There was another great being called Narasinga Swami who used to wander through the streets of the town of Pandharpur. He was not emaciated like Bapumayi. His body was so strong that even a wrestler

18. When a *saṃnyāsin* renounces the pleasures of the earthly, ancestral and heavenly worlds, it is commonly considered that the merit earned by his action raises him to the level of Narayana, or God.

seemed puny by comparison. Narasinga Swami went around naked. He would bathe wherever he found a water tap. No one could count how many times he bathed during the day and night. He observed silence. If he spoke at all, he would say only one or two very mysterious words.

People would give him things with great love. As he walked down the street, he would enter a restaurant. Inside he would say, "Yes, yes," point out a number of items, and eat a large amount. Then he would leave and continue walking down the street. When he came across another water tap, he would bathe again and then go into another restaurant.

This play would continue throughout the day. At night, he would lie down on the ground in front of any store, fall sound asleep and begin to snore. The earth was his bed. The sky in all four directions was his blanket. How radiant, how joyful he was! He did not feel cold, nor did the earth give him discomfort. He was independent of his body.

I slept by his side one night. When he woke up at three o'clock in the morning, I also got up. He sang a poem in Kannada, the essence of which was: "What should one own, and what should one renounce? When both these notions have disappeared, what does a fully ripened *yogī* need? What does he reject?" By the time he had bathed, one of the restaurants had opened. He immediately went in and ate. Then he slowly began to walk down the road. I went up to him and bowed.

He said, "What I said is all there is." That was my meeting with this strange Siddha.

181. From there I went to visit Adoni Lakshmibai. She was an extraordinary *yoginī* who had attained an exalted

state. Four women used to take care of her. If they dressed her, she would toss the clothes aside. Once she noticed a man coming to see her. She yelled, "Ah, that scoundrel is coming here! He's a cheat; he's greedy. He wants to please me by bringing bananas, sweets and money. Even though he's had three wives, he has no children. He wants a son." Then she covered her head with a blanket and went to sleep.

When the man arrived, the women attendants asked him, "Did you bring bananas?"

"Yes," he replied.

"Have you had three wives?" they asked. He had. "Do you want a child?" He did. Then they said, "Now you can leave!"

The whole time the man was there, Adoni Lakshmibai had remained asleep. The moment he left, she awoke. Nine months later his wife gave birth to a son. What a unique Siddha *yoginī*! She was truly extraordinary.

182. Many years ago in the town of Ālandi in Maharashtra there lived a sublime Siddha *yogī*. His name was Jnaneshwar Maharaj. Although he was young, he was very compassionate and considered everyone as equal. When any other Siddha came near him, Jnaneshwar always appeared to be just one inch greater.

He lived with his brothers and his younger sister Muktabai. At that time, there was in their village a very orthodox priest called Visoba Khechar. Out of jealousy of the children's attainment, he had instructed the village shopkeepers not to sell anything to Jnaneshwar's family.

One day Muktabai wanted to make puranpoli but when she went to the market no one would sell her a

pan. She returned home and called her brother Jnaneshwar. He said, "Don't worry, my sister. You can cook the bread on my back." He got down on his hands and knees, saying, "Inside, there is a mighty fire. Let it blaze." The moment he spoke these words, his inner fire was kindled through his yogic power and his back became red hot. Muktabai cooked the bread on his back and fed everyone.

Jnaneshwar Maharaj was such a great and powerful *yogī* that the eight great supernatural powers followed at his heels. Even today his writings are read and revered throughout the world.

183. Muktabai was a great *yoginī* even as a child. Like her brother Jnaneshwar, she was a great poet. One day her brother sent the famous *yogī* Shri Changadev to see her. Arriving unexpectedly, he accidentally entered the room where Muktabai was taking a bath.

As he was rushing from the room, Muktabai shouted after him: "Fool! After all your years of study, you are still no *yogī*. You have seen so many naked cows grazing on the meadows. O Changadev, you should see me as you see those cows. Because you have not received the blessings of a perfect master, you are still not free from the duality of ego — men and women, high and low. Lose your ego and there will be no difference between you and me. Then you will realize your pure Self, which is beyond all these outer appearances."

Hearing these words, Shri Changadev ran back into the room and fell prostrate before Muktabai, calling her Mother over and over. With the last trace of his ego washed away, he became as pure and perfect as the rays of the sun.

Muktabai was such a great and powerful Siddha *yoginī* that one word from her could transform a seeker.

184. In Pandharpur lived a saint called Janabai who was a devotee of Namdev Maharaj. Her heart and mind were pure. She was devoted to God and indifferent to the world. She was always absorbed in her work. She spent her life grinding grain, and as she did this she constantly chanted God's name. Seeing her love and devotion, God would assume a form and, out of love for her, would help her grind the grain.

That is what the Siddhas say about Janabai, and I have complete faith in it. What is impossible for God?

185. The great Queen Mirabai is a well-known historical figure. She was a great lover of Krishna and became so immersed in devotion to God that she lost interest in her high position. If a person has swum in the ocean of love, why would she take interest in a river or stream? Mirabai used to wear anklets and chant and dance in the temple. Chanting is a great therapy. I do not know how far one can go with modern psychotherapy, but I know that the therapy of chanting can wholly rejuvenate a person. Mirabai was one of the Siddha *yoginīs*. She was once given poison to drink. Chanting God's name, she drank it, considering it a blessing from God. It did not affect her. This shows the power of chanting.

186. There was another *yoginī* named Sakhubai. She was a householder. She loved the saints and the holy town of Pandharpur but had to live with her very strong-willed mother-in-law.

One day Sakhubai wanted to visit Pandharpur, but her mother-in-law refused to let her go. When Sakhubai prepared to leave anyway, her mother-in-law tied her to a post.

God's power is so extraordinary that He can do and undo anything. Through His thought alone the world comes into existence, so what can be impossible for Him?

Sakhubai wept, saying, "O Lord, I've heard that you take care of your devotees. Can't this poor woman have the *darśana* of Pandharpur and your pilgrims there? Won't you have compassion on me?" The *Bhagavadgītā* says that if we remember God even once, He remembers us a hundred times. At that point, God assumed a form identical to that of Sakhubai, released her and tied Himself to the post.

Sakhubai immediately went to Pandharpur and met all the saints there. The Lord, who is dear to His devotees, had fulfilled her desires, and she returned promptly. God tied her to the post again and disappeared.

Meanwhile, the mother-in-law had gone to the river to fetch water. Some pilgrims happened to meet her there and said to her, "We saw your daughter-in-law in Pandharpur. She is on her way back; in fact, she must have arrived by now." The mother-in-law's eyes grew red with anger and she rushed home; but when she arrived, she saw Sakhubai still tied to the post. She questioned her, and Sakhubai told the truth.

Everyone felt very sorry and said, "Oh! It was God Himself who took Sakhubai's form. Our own blindness deceived us, and we didn't recognize Him." There is no doubt that a person reaps the fruits of his own actions. The great sage Narada said that a genuine devotee always remains immersed in God. It is so true. God is wholly under the control of His devotees. Sakhubai

became a great Siddha *yoginī* even while leading the life of a householder.

187. Another great and very well-respected woman saint was Rabi'a Basari. She was a renunciant who had attained perfect knowledge. She had led a just life, and even the eminent saint Hassan revered her. She had many miraculous powers. If she did not go to Mecca to see God, He would come to her. I have read about this. One day a mendicant was praying to God, "O Lord, open the door for me." Rabi'a, who was also present, said, "O brother, when was God's door closed?" She was a remarkable Siddha *yoginī* who had attained God and who had discovered the secret of knowledge.

188. Akkamahadevi lived in Karnataka. She was a great renunciant and was always absorbed in chanting the five-syllable *mantra, oṃ namaḥ śivāya*. She was the disciple of Shri Basaveshwar, a Siddha who had attained the state of Shiva. Her great love forced God to manifest before her in the form of Mallikarjuna in the renowned holy place of Shrishailam. Her poems were like divine *mantras*.

189. There have been countless other women saints and *yoginīs*. I could write forever about them. I will mention only a few of their names: Shivabhakta, Lalleshwari of Kashmir, Phulibai, Jayadevi, Bahinabai, Mallamma, Anasuya, Gargi (the knower of the Absolute), and Maitreyi. In India there have been many Siddha *yoginīs* to whom people pray every morning. I welcome them all with love.

7

The State of a Siddha

190. O Shri Gurudev, I bow to you again and again! You are the highest of all deities. You are the morning sun of intellect. O King of all Gurus! You are the only source of joy. You are the ultimate resting place of all. You alone grant Self-realization. You are the ocean from which the waves of creation arise, making diverse forms composed of the five elements. Your Siddhahood is supremely independent!

191. It is God who rises in the form of the sun. He dwells in the hearts of all beings and in the thousand-rayed tendencies of the mind. He illumines the three states and the three worlds. He causes lost souls to return to Him. The power of the Siddhas' grace cures one's forgetfulness. Then the awareness of the all-pervasive Consciousness arises automatically.

192. The Lord of Consciousness compels all 8,400,000 species of creatures to dance on the stage of the outer world. Each one dances its own strange dance as if in a

movie. He has adorned each of them, from Brahma to an insect, with a body according to its individual needs. Each creature becomes stiff with ego, forgets its own Self and suffers. Through the wisdom of the Siddhas, a person regains his knowledge of the Self and becomes the embodiment of supreme bliss. After he becomes established in perfection, no matter what he may perceive through his eyes or his intellect, he no longer distinguishes between himself and what he sees. His vision reveals to him his own true nature. A person who looks in a mirror sees his own face, which existed even before he looked in the mirror. Similarly, wherever a Siddha looks he sees his own Self, which is without beginning.

193. When that that is seen disappears, nothing remains except the seer. The act of seeing also vanishes. For example, a person dreams that he is embracing his friend, but when he awakes there is neither friend nor embrace and he naturally becomes still. To experience perfection is the glorious result of a Siddha's grace. Then, no matter what a person may see or experience, he perceives the same thing in all. He acquires the vision that penetrates beyond the distinction of seer and the seen. Just as the sky is full of itself and therefore remains motionless, similarly, once a person fully enters the Self, he never moves from that state. This is the sign of Siddhahood.

194. At the end of each world cycle only water remains. Because it fills all space, there is no current or movement within it. In the same way, when the Self is full of itself there is only stillness. How can fire devour

itself? How can water bath itself? Likewise, when a Siddha *yogī* becomes one with the Self of all, his coming and going ceases. The culmination of the journey to perfection is the cessation of all actions.

195. In the ocean there is only water. The waves that arise from one place and fall somewhere else are water. That which creates this movement is also water. No matter how high waves may leap, they cannot go beyond the ocean shores; however high the tide may be, its essence, water, remains unaffected. The basic unity of the ocean is never destroyed. Similarly, when one attains Siddhahood, the bondage of duality ceases to exist.

196. However firmly embedded the awareness of one's individuality may be, it ultimately merges into Consciousness. For this reason, one is always a pilgrim journeying towards Consciousness. Even if the needs of the body force a person to perform actions, he still ultimately attains the Lord of Consciousness. At that point, the ideas of doer and action vanish. Seeing only his own Self as Consciousness everywhere, a person becomes God. This is the Siddha's attainment of the knowledge of perfection.

197. How can a mirror see itself? Why would one cover gold with gold plate? When a flame is already burning, a second flame cannot illumine it. In the same way, whatever a Siddha may do can never be considered action. To his vision, everything is That, neither good nor bad. This is the nature of perfect Siddhahood.

198. Since a Siddha sees all actions and their results as God, how can he be said to perform actions? This state

is known as supreme devotion to God and as the knowledge of the enlightened beings. A Siddha may appear to perform actions, but in fact he does not. Whatever he does is his worship of God. Whatever he says is a hymn of praise to Him. Whatever he sees, he sees as God. Wherever he walks, it is his pilgrimage to the supreme, divine unity. O friend, this is how a Siddha lives.

199. Because a Siddha's vision embodies the Absolute, whatever he does is worship of the Lord of Consciousness. Whatever thought of the outer world he may hold in his mind is repetition of God's name. If a Siddha remains still, his stillness is the state of *samādhi*. O friend, understand that just as a gold bracelet never becomes different from gold, a Siddha, through knowledge, devotion, and *yoga*, constantly remains united with God. This is the vision of the Siddhas.

200. O friend, as waves are in water, fragrance in camphor, and brilliance in jewels, so a Siddha dwells in supreme unity. As warp and woof are inseparable from cloth, as clay is inseparable from pots, so a Siddha is entirely one with God. A Siddha *yogī* who has attained complete knowledge of That remains inseparably immersed in Consciousness; he is the Self of the universe. Perceiving only Consciousness, he knows the seer as it is. Through his awareness of the Self in all objects, he knows the true nature of the seen. You may call this state madness. O friend, correct your vision. Cure your own madness. Through the meditation and knowledge of the Siddhas, you will realize, "I was the one who was deluded."

201. The following story makes an important point: Once there lived a crow king and an owl king. Both had many companions. They lived with their friends in the same forest on their respective trees. One day they met, and the crow asked, "Why do you work at night?" The owl protested, "O brother, it is you who works at night." This began a long, heated argument. As they argued, the day wore on and became night. The owl said, "O king of the crows, now it is day." The crow replied, "No, brother, it is night." Then they began to fight in earnest.

At that point, a swan arrived and said, "Don't fight. You are both right. What is day for a crow is night for an owl. What is day for an owl is night for a crow."

In the same way, an ignorant person's day of sense pleasures and possessions is night for a Siddha and is to be renounced. What is day for a Siddha - his awareness of the Self of all, the knowledge of "I am That", and the understanding of the all-pervasive light of bliss - is night for an ignorant person. Turn your night into day. Muktananda says, "Then Siddha Yoga is filled with ecstasy and joy."

202. The wise person who has attained Siddhahood sees that he himself, the seer, is the entire universe. Having attained this wisdom and experience of the Self in this very body, he begins to dance with joy. He comes to the conclusion that what he had perceived as a snake is nothing but a rope. When his *kuṇḍalinī* is awakened and he totally merges with Shiva, his inner experience illumines his outer world as well. Then he has the outlook of a Siddha.

203. When gold ornaments are melted, it becomes obvious that even in name they were never different from gold. When a seeker understands that waves consist of nothing but water, he never again considers their forms to be either lasting in themselves or separate from the ocean. Similarly, through the grace of a Siddha the wisdom of the Siddhas arises from within, and one feels, "Ah, I am all this!"

204. When a person awakens he is no longer aware of the various ramblings of his dreams. He is conscious only of his waking state. Similarly, a Siddha forgets the dream of bondage and understands that he, the Knower, is everything visible and invisible—all objects, the process of knowing, all that there is. He experiences: "I am the Knower. I am unborn, deathless, indestructible and inexhaustible. I am primordial, limitless bliss." This is the true understanding of Siddha Yoga.

205. A Siddha has this continual awareness: "That conscious Being is ancient. He is both unmanifest and manifest. I am controlled by the Supreme Power, and I am the controller as well. That Supreme Power is beginningless, indestructible and fearless. It is both the support and that which is supported. I am self-born and exist in all forms as the inner Self. I am also beyond everything. I am new as well as old. I am the void as well as the whole. I am both large and small. I am every existing thing." This is the statement of the Siddhas.

206. "I am a Siddha and exist everywhere equally. I am filled with Consciousness." Through God's grace and his one-pointed devotion, a Siddha truly knows this. He

is also aware that he is the knowledge of the experience of the Self. Just as an ignorant person naturally identifies himself with the body, a Siddha fully experiences himself as the embodiment of bliss. A Siddha lives in total freedom.

207. A person who has a nightmare becomes terrified. He awakens with a start and asks those around him, "Where did the three-horned tiger go?" He creates his own dream images and then fears them, but both the dream and the fear vanish when he awakens. Likewise, a Siddha *yogī* becomes serene, carefree and pure when he perceives the universe within himself. Then he spontaneously retains the experience of perfection.

208. Not only does the rising sun reveal the world, it also reveals itself. This illustrates how the revealer and what is revealed are one and the same. Similarly, when both knowledge and ignorance vanish, only the Knower remains. When a person fully understands this, he himself becomes the Knower. Siddha Yoga has unlimited power to grant one the vision of one's own Self.

209. Only one who has the supreme knowledge of unity and equality can know the state of an enlightened being. A Siddha understands that he himself is the force behind that power of knowledge. He also understands that he is the principle of the Self, beyond both unity and duality, beyond the beyond. There is no doubt about this. When a person awakens from sleep, for a moment he is aware only of himself. The state of a being who experiences direct knowledge is permanently like this. He becomes calm and attains the Siddhas' awareness of equality.

210. Someone once asked Saint Tukaram, "What is the state of a saint, a great soul, an enlightened being, a Siddha? What is his experience?" Tukaram Maharaj replied, "If you want to know how a fish sleeps in water, you will have to become a fish." Just as a fish lives immersed in water so, when a person becomes established in the state of a Siddha, his whole being is immersed in his own true nature. One cannot understand his state of being. Only a Siddha can know it.

211. When Maharishi Narada was asked this question about the state of a saint, he replied, "A devotee is wholly immersed in Consciousness and has lost himself in it." When they are heated, gold ornaments melt but remain gold. When salt dissolves in water, it seems to disappear, but the salty taste remains. Similarly, even though a Siddha has the awareness "I am the Supreme Absolute" and merges into the nectar of ecstasy, he still experiences his own bliss and becomes serene. This is the state of the Siddhas.

212. As long as Lord Krishna was with Arjuna, Arjuna was victorious in many battles. He was considered an illustrious man. He was so worthy that the Lord revealed to him the secret knowledge behind the mystery of the *Vedas* and showed him His universal form.

Many years later Krishna left this earth. For so long, because of Krishna's physical presence, Arjuna had felt secure in Krishna's grace. But now he thought the Lord was dead and he became filled with sorrow. At this time Arjuna was in charge of escorting some of the Lord's people to another town. Suddenly some tribal boys attacked them and began to rob the women. To his horror, Arjuna discovered that he was powerless

to stop them. That same Arjuna with his powerful bow and arrows was incapable of preventing the robbery.

O my friend, Arjuna's victories had never been due to his bravery but to Krishna's grace. Because of his wrong understanding of the Lord's true nature, Arjuna lost all his strength and became weak. Even a single thought of Krishna would have been enough to give him strength, but now ordinary tribal boys defeated him. He did not remember Krishna so he no longer had Krishna's grace.

Remember that as long as Shri Guru's grace and compassion are with Muktananda, he is fine. Otherwise he is worth only a penny. Protect your right understanding. Discard the ego that you have hidden behind your knowledge. You may think that it is well concealed, but your ego is betraying you.

The Siddhas' behaviour towards others is pure and totally free of deception. Always contemplate their non-attachment, their awareness of equality and their true love for all. Then the Siddhas' grace will awaken in you.

213. The Supreme Being is inherent in all that one does. He sees all one's actions and immediately determines their fruits. If one plants strawberries, one will not harvest apples. A cat eats with its eyes closed and thinks that no one can see it. O cat, you may have closed your eyes, but the eyes of the Witness remain open. One's actions are the Absolute itself. They create one's heaven and hell. Be vigilant. Be pure within and without. Know that only then will you come closer to discovering the secret of the Siddhas. Remember this.

214. As I mentioned before, the divine sage Narada said, "A devotee is wholly immersed in Consciousness." When a *yogī* enters the supreme light of the Absolute, he relinquishes all notions of himself and others. His former idea of "I" and "that" is annihilated. He merges into his own true nature and becomes perfect. Such a great being does not become an inflated ego-balloon. He does not flaunt himself, saying, "I saw myself above the seventh heaven." He does not stretch out his begging bowl and say, "Call me God." A being who is fearful and depends on bodyguards to protect him cannot be God, nor can one who has to be locked up in a mental hospital to cool down his deranged mind. Shaivism says, सिद्धः स्वतन्त्रभावः।[19] "A Siddha lives in total freedom."

215. For a great being there is no attachment, no enmity, no delusion and no fear. He merges all his different "therapies" into the space of Consciousness. He does not perceive any stench in others. He becomes one with the awareness of equality. He does not drink the foul poison of criticizing others, nor does he quietly burn inwardly in the fire of enmity and jealousy when he sees or hears of others' greatness. It is astonishing: If one crow gets a morsel of food, all the other crows pursue him. For the same reason a vulture chases another vulture, or a mongrel trails another mongrel. In the jungle one animal is always waiting to prey upon another. If a being is in the same state as these animals, he is neither God nor a Siddha, a *sādhu* or a noble person. O my friends, think about this. What is Siddhahood?

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19. *Śivasūtras*, 3.13

216. When camphor begins to burn, one can see a flame. When both the camphor and the flame vanish, only space remains. When one subtracts one from one, nothing is left. In the same way, when one discards one's ideas about what exists and what does not exist, of what is present and what is not present, all that remains is Truth and infinite bliss. This state is not a piano of ego on which one plays *sa, re, ga, ma, pa, dha, ni, sa*. In this state, even such words as the Absolute, the Self and God obstruct one's bliss; there is not even any room to say, "Nothing exists here." This is the state the Siddhas have attained.

217. The state of a Siddha is beyond both knowing and not knowing. In that state, bliss is embraced with bliss. Joy is experienced through joy. Success is gained through success. Light dwells within light. Shaivism says that the stages of *yoga* are filled with amazing phenomena.[20] In that state, astonishment drowns in astonishment. All dos and don'ts are silenced. Rest attains total rest. Experience delights in experience. The state of a Siddha is the attainment of total perfection. Siddhas are like this. O friend, read this very carefully.

218. One who constantly practises the disciplines of Siddha Yoga and performs noble actions attains the pure fruit of the nature of the Self. It can be understood in this way: Imagine that Siddha Yoga is a temple and that liberation, the final attainment of Siddha Yoga, is the crown of the dome of that temple. Know that when the *yogī* reaches that crown, he becomes as all-pervading as the sky above the dome.

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20. *Śivasūtras*, 1.12.

It can also be understood in another way: Siddha Yoga is a broad stream through the forest of the world. This stream leads to the realm of oneness where the individual soul and the Absolute merge. Through knowledge, devotion and *yoga*, a person is swiftly carried along by the current and merges into the ocean of bliss, the name of God. Then a Siddha *yogī* becomes an exalted being. This is why I have written at length about him.

8

The Guru is the Means

219. Now, after discussing the Supreme Principle in detail, we will turn to *sādhanā*, or the means of attaining that Principle. The Supreme Principle is not something one attains by doing *sādhanā* in the right place at the right time. Consciousness is complete within itself and exists in all eternally. Shaivism teaches that this entire world is the play of Consciousness. For this reason, one does not have to undergo any kind of difficulty to attain God. Through Siddha Yoga, one automatically attains the principles of the Self. Siddha Yoga is effortless and simple.

220. It is universally true that in all fields, if there is a student, then there must also be a teacher. In this world, there is a teacher for every subject. This is nothing new. If there is a music student, there is also a music teacher; if there is a patient, there is also an acupuncturist, a healer, or a psychic who perceives the unseen. Similarly, if there is a spiritual seeker, there must also be a guide to point out the right path. In Siddha Yoga the Siddha Guru guides the seeker unerringly.

On the Siddha Path one needs a Guru who has been chosen by another Siddha of the true lineage of Siddhas. He must have complete knowledge and be proficient in transmitting energy and removing all obstacles. He should always be pure, simple and straightforward, capable of bestowing wisdom and making love flow. He must know that true Principle just as it is. He must have become one with That. He should be content with whatever comes to him and free of addictions. He must also be a master of diplomacy. One needs a Guru who can point out the path to attain the Self, but in addition one has to put forth self-effort.

221. Treasures lie in the womb of the earth, fire is latent in wood, and milk is in the udder of a cow; however, one has to take certain actions to acquire them. In the same way, even though the Supreme Principle is within us, a person who wishes to attain it must use the right means. This is necessary because we have been going in the wrong direction for such a long time. Even a person of discrimination and exalted vision must make some effort in order for that Principle to manifest for him completely.

222. One's hands can remove moss from water but they cannot create water. Forgetfulness of one's true nature is the moss of ignorance that muddies the experience of the Self. The Guru is the means of removing it. Just as the wind disperses the clouds but does not create another blazing sun, so the grace of a Siddha simply removes the veil of ignorance so that one realizes that one is already perfect. Consciousness, or the awareness "I am perfect", always remains pure and radiant.

For this reason, all scriptures and *sādhanās* are simply means of washing away the filth of ignorance. They have no ability of their own to reveal the wisdom of the Self because that Principle is self-existent, perfect and always manifest.

How the Siddhas attain that state of Truth is the mystery of *yoga*. When the sun rises in the east, all other directions are illumined with brilliant light. In the same way, when the Siddhas follow this exalted path, the Supreme Principle manifests of its own accord. I repeat this again and again in great detail for the benefit of the seeker who is engaged in *sādhanā*. It will enable him to know the Truth and thus become happy and carefree. He will realize how easy it is to reach that state without getting lost or going in the wrong direction. The Siddha Path is so simple that he will instantly reach his true state.

223. Constant and independent contentment is the sign of a being who has attained That. When a seeker becomes worthy of attaining the Absolute, his mind becomes unshakeable and contented. The path of the *siddhas* leads to the wisdom of the Supreme Principle. During the rainy season there are floods, but in autumn the river becomes quiet and its turbulence calms down. At the end of a song, the accompanying drum beat dies out. In the same way, one's striving and tension vanish the moment one attains Self-realization. The serenity and joy of this state are the glory of Self-realization. At this point one is flooded with the awareness of inner contentment. A fountain of joy wells up in one's heart when one's awareness becomes stable. Then one has attained Siddhahood. One is awarded the highest certificate from the Siddha University. O friend, make sure that you get the right certificate.

224. When the sun rises all the stars fade away in its brilliance. Similarly, when the sun of knowledge rises in the heart and a person experiences the essence of the Self, the universe of diversity with its countless beings and objects is dissolved for him. Duality perishes. The radiant sun of the Self blazes in his eyes. Its flame radiates through every pore of his body. As it flashes, his entire body is filled with the nectar of love. Drops of nectar from the stream of love flow from his eyes. His words shower love. His speech is never an arrow that pierces others' hearts with bitter, cruel or filthy words. The wisdom of the Siddhas is sweet.

225. When one is initiated into *saṃnyāsa*, one dons clothing of radiant orange. Similarly, as love shimmers within a *svāmī*, his speech, language and understanding become clothed with sweetness. He looks upon everyone with love. Harsh words are a sign of inner dryness. Self-praise is evidence of non-attainment. Cruelty is proof of hatred. This idea of differences indicates the cancer of ignorance. Living in the midst of people, a *svāmī* loves all but remains independent of everyone. He gives up all expectations. True *saṃnyāsa* spontaneously makes a *svāmī* a natural renunciant. In Muktananda's words, it is not enough merely to play the role of a *saṃnyāsin*. A real *saṃnyāsin* belongs to the Nandapadma Order.

226. O friend! A person may claim to be a great being, a Siddha or a leader. He may be a performer of miracles. He may claim to hold the degree of God. But if he does not behave properly, he will lead people astray. The behaviour of a great being is the greatest example for others, and they follow it. Become true, sublime,

perfect and pure. Never lead people in the wrong direction. Muktananda welcomes you all from his own Self. For me, true Guruhood is God.

227. Every person has some addiction. He loves that addiction and makes it his intimate friend. There is a particular group of proverbs about addictions, which are true as well as witty. One of them is: "The sun loves salutations." In *haṭhayoga* the salutation to the sun is a very important exercise. When I was in Miami Beach, I saw that every man, woman and child had so much respect for the sun that they lay outside for hours on end. Perhaps this was their way of showing love and devotion to the sun!

There is another saying: "Lord Vishnu likes ornaments." In India people adorn the temples of Vishnu with great splendour. In America there are also countless varieties of ornamentation: out of self-respect, people beautify themselves with plastic surgery, numerous types of make-up and fashionable clothes. I have gained a great deal of understanding from all of this. The whole world is imitating Vishnu's love of ornaments. Go ahead and adorn yourself – but remember, do not throw the wisdom of Vishnu into the dustbin. His Self is within you. I tell everyone, "It is not enough just to imitate Vishnu outwardly. Adorn the inner Vishnu as well. The cosmetic shop is within." Siddha Yoga tells everyone to go to that shop.

A third saying is: "Shiva loves a ritual bath." Shaivites worship Shiva in the form of a *liṅgam* by giving it a ritual bath. As they recite *mantras*, they pour over it yogurt, milk, honey, coconut water and other delicious liquids. If the worshipper does this with the feeling that

God is everywhere, He will receive these offerings. God is pleased if the worshipper is contented. We imitate this Shiva worship. We give ourselves ritual "baths" with Coca-Cola, lemonade, orange juice, brandy or vodka. Some are intoxicating and others are not. Remember that Shiva is also within the inner heart. Give Him a ritual bath there as well. Bathe Him with ever-increasing love, which is sweet and nectarean. The intoxication of inner love will arise, and you yourself will become Shiva.

228. O friend, everyone in the world has one addiction or another. I also have an addiction that I cherish, and that is Shri Gurudev. I am very fond of saying *sadgurunāth mahārāj ki jai!* I dearly love to gaze at his face. I am also addicted to repeating *guru oṃ, guru om.*

Tukaram Maharaj was addicted to chanting. Namdev was addicted to singing the divine name. Mirabai was addicted to putting on anklets and dancing and chanting with the intoxication of love. Surdas was addicted to devotion; Eknath Maharaj was addicted to devotion to the Guru; Jnaneshwar Maharaj was addicted to knowledge of God and the Guru. Even after attaining perfection, these saints still had their addictions. In the same way, I am addicted to my Guru. Wherever I go to eat, bathe, sleep or give *darśana*, I like to have a beautiful picture of him before me.

But the *guru* market is down, not only in America but throughout the world. The moment a person hears the word *guru* he becomes upset. If anyone mentions the word *guru* to his family or displays a *guru's* photographs, he is considered crazy. Young boys and girls may go anywhere – to a theatre, movie or disco to drink

beer or rum. They may go with their friends wherever they want, and their families will give them money for their expenses. But they place one condition on this: They must not go to a *guru* or chant God's name. If the boys and girls do not listen, their families take away their pocket money. They get people to convince them not to go to a *guru*.

Why is the *guru* market so low these days? It is because *gurus* do not behave properly. Of course, some *gurus* are true. In all fields there are both the genuine and the false, so it is not at all remarkable that there are also false *gurus*. Nevertheless, when people are deceived and suffer loss, it is only because of their wrong understanding. One finds a *guru* who is like oneself. One accepts a *guru* according to one's own nature. So says Muktananda.

229. There are different religions, such as Sufism, Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism. There are rabbis, Muslim priests, ayatollahs and popes. There are also different lineages that originated from Gurus who were true and intelligent. The Guru's position is lofty, noble and worthy of respect. Lord Krishna's Guru was Sandipani; Shri Ram's Guru was Vasishtha; Kabir's Guru was Ramananda. There were Shankaracharya, Guru Nanakdev and Jesus; their power is still actively functioning in the world. There were *svāmīs* of the Nandapadma Order whose teachings were sublime. They were boats in which people crossed over the ocean of worldliness. The passage on those boats was guaranteed. Those who sailed on them had no fear because those great Gurus always took a person to the final goal. Guruhood is not an evil thing, but if a person makes himself a *guru* without having attained

Guruhood, then his boat sinks, and the *guru* market goes down.

230. I do not put pressure on anyone. Siddha Yoga is not a *guru* cult. But in every field one needs a guide. On the spiritual path, too, a Guru is necessary. At certain times in one's life, healers, psychologists, psychics and professors may all be necessary. In the same way, in spiritual life one needs a guide who is wise and compassionate, who observes good conduct, who has studied the scriptures and spiritual philosophies, and who has understood the Truth. He should have been the disciple of a spiritual leader who incorporated scriptural injunctions into his own life.

Whatever anyone may say or think about me, I take great interest in my Guru. My love for him has become an addiction. That Siddha gave me one word[21] that completely transformed me, but I had to spend such a long time with him to receive it. That word, which I received after so many years, spread through my body from head to toe like wildfire carried by the wind. It produced in me both inner heat and the coolness of joy.

Before meeting my Guru I had practised many different kinds of *yoga*, but it was I who had practised them. However, that word activated a spontaneous *yoga* within me. I was filled with amazement. What postures, *mudrās* and breathing processes! Everything happened on its own. After attaining divine realization, I understood my compassionate Guru.

231. After the awakening of the Shakti, this process of yogic movements began to take place within my entire

21. The *mantra*.

body. What power that word had! I almost hesitate to write all of this. It revealed whatever was within me—in my heart and in my head. I saw my own double many times. In the *sahasrāra* at the crown of the head I perceived the brilliance of a thousand suns. I also saw the Blue Being. Sometimes I would lose myself within; then I would regain consciousness. It was like a play, similar to that of the waking and dream states. Even now I do not know where I lose my small self and from where it returns. It is so amusing – I lose myself, then find myself. I have seen the centre of true joy; there I lose myself and from there I return. I am ecstatic! I have found the best place of all, right within myself.

232. I have rediscovered that which I never lost. Still, my addiction has not left me. Jai Gurudev! Such a great addiction to the Guru! *Guru om!* The repetition of this great *mantra* occurs even in my dreams. I do not know who repeats it there. My Guru's picture seems to come alive for me. When I look at his eyes, I see radiance. When I gaze at his body, it seems to be moving. When I look at his face, a smile seems to play on his lips. People may think this is madness. So be it. How beautiful! How exquisite! How ecstatic! Sometimes in the privacy of my room, I dance while singing *guru oṃ, guru om.* Sometimes I feel that my beloved's head is swaying in the photograph. Such madness of love arises within me! The pulsation of his ecstasy pervades my entire body like the movement of the wind. I have become what I wanted to become. Still, my addiction has never left me. The blessings of the Guru are wondrous and extraordinary.

233. How did I become so hopelessly addicted? After pondering this question for a long time, I finally

realized that he himself had entered me through my ear in the form of that word. The power of the Self had entered me. The *kriyās* were his, the *yoga* was his, and meditation took place because of him. It was he, the embodiment of Consciousness, who emerged from the Blue Pearl. The final message that I received was from him. I have come to understand that he is the bliss of infinity, the bliss of love, the bliss of perfection, the bliss of the Supreme and the bliss of the Self. What an extraordinary discovery!

234. Now I completely understand my addiction. It is his radiance in the light of my eyes; it is his utterance in the speech of my tongue. Through my breathing, it is he who comes in and goes out. It is he who eats, drinks, hears and makes me hear. The power of his word permeates each of my blood cells; the fluids of my entire body are his. That is why I am joyful. I now understand that what I considered to be myself was totally unreal. I had made an error in calculation and was trapped in it. The truth is that Gurudev himself had entered me through that word.

235. Ah, what power that word had! Gurudev entered me and replaced all my bodily fluids with his. How powerful he is! He evicted me and took up residence himself. He annihilated my ego. Now I understand that this was why I became addicted to him. Once Sheikh Nasruddin wore someone else's coat and claimed that it belonged to him. This is not like that. My Guru entered me, and who knows where he disposed of me? By making my individuality his, he became me. This is the Guru's compassion.

236. My attainment is Gurudev. My *sādhanā* is Gurudev. My realization is Gurudev. My *mantra* is Gurudev. What is the formless or the attributeless? What is realization of the form? It is all delusion created by words. When two sticks are rubbed together, an exquisite flame arises. By the churning of milk, butter is produced. Similarly, joy arises from the love of *guru om* and from the churning of the love between the Guru and the disciple. Only the Guru can know that delight and taste the elixir that arises in every pore of the body. This love cannot be attained through practising *yoga*, through indulging in sense pleasures or through prattling about knowledge.

Only when a river merges into the ocean can it fully know the splendour of the ocean. Only when I lost myself in the ecstasy of Nityananda did I realize who he was. He is the nectar of love that arises when everything, sentient and insentient, becomes one. He is the beauty of the world. He pervades all forms, conscious and inert. He is the luminous sun, the moon and the stars in the heavens. He frolics and sways with love in the blowing of the wind. His consciousness glimmers in men and women. There is only Nityananda, nothing but Nityananda. He is the bliss of the Absolute, the bliss of the Self, the bliss of freedom and the bliss of love. There is only love, love, nothing but love.

Book II
The Philosophy of the Siddhas

9

The Origin of Kashmir Shaivism

237. Now I shall write briefly about the essence of Kashmir Shaivism. Supreme Shiva Himself gave birth to the Shaiva philosophy, and Vasuguptacharya, a great Siddha being and the head of a distinguished lineage, elaborated it. Shaivism teaches that Shiva and Shakti are the cause of the universe. They are not two but one. Shaivism tells us that Shiva is static, attributeless and formless and that Shakti is His dynamic aspect. Shiva is the seeker's ultimate goal.

238. This Shiva, who is also called Srikantha, is the Primordial Being of Shaivism. From Shiva came Vasugupta, Somananda, Utpalacharya, Lakshmanagupta, Ramakantha, Abhinavagupta, Kshemaraja, Yogaraja, Kallata, Pradyumna Bhatta, Prajnarjuna, Mahadeva Bhatta, Shrikantha Bhatta, Bhaskara and other Siddhas. This lineage originating from Shiva has existed since time immemorial.

There were also many *yogīs* who came from Shiva, one of whom was Durvasa. He created three sons, Tryambaka, Amardaka and Shrinatha, through the

power of his mind. The history of all these beings is vast, profound and highly secret. It would take great effort to write such a lengthy history. Seekers do not need to know it. We should neither waste our time nor lose faith and trust by discussing the origin of rivers and great beings. These investigations only add to our doubts.

239. Why should we know the origin of rivers? Our duty is to bathe in them, to wash away our impurities and to cool the heat of our bodies. In the same way it is our duty to understand the sages, to contemplate their teachings and to practise the *sādhanā* that they have shown us. It is our duty to attain our own divinity, to become happy in the bliss or reunion with the Self and to lead our lives with great freedom and joy. Above all, our task is to complete our journey to the Self. Harbouring unnecessary doubts makes a person fall from the path.

240. The principal scripture of Shaivism is the *Śivasūtras*. These teachings were revealed by Shiva and kept highly secret until the great Siddha Vasugupta disseminated them throughout the world. Many Siddhas in Vasugupta's lineage wrote works based on the *Śivasūtras*.

241. The *Śivasūtras* describe three *upāyas*, or means of *sādhanā* – *śāṃbhavopāya*, *śāktopāya* and *āṇavopāya*. These three *upāyas* were established in the *Śivasūtras* to suit the temperaments, qualities and natures of different people and enable them to attain the same Self.

242. The sages described the characteristics of a *sūtra* as follows: अल्पाक्षरमसन्दिग्धम् ।[22] This means that a *sūtra* should contain very few words but should leave no room for doubt. A *sūtra* should capture the essence of the principle it discusses. It should provide satisfactory solutions to problems according to the time and place. *Sūtras* should neither be contradictory nor give misinformation. Some *sūtras* are so pithy that they are unclear even to great scholars. At such times one needs the help of an experienced Guru.

243. The *Śivasūtras* consist of seventy-seven *sūtras* written in simple language and divided into three sections. The first section contains the *sūtras* belonging to the *śāṃbhavopāya*, the second to the *śāktopāya* and the third to the *āṇavopāya*. Originally, Gurus taught these *sūtras* to their disciples orally and in secret. Later the great being Vasugupta wrote them down and disseminated them throughout the world. Now they are easily accessible. They are Vasugupta's great gift to us. We offer our salutations at his feet.

244. Seekers should assimilate completely the essence of the *Śivasūtras*. They should make an effort to acquire the ability to digest them entirely. The subject should not give them dysentery.

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22. *Padma Purāṇa.*

10

Śāṃbhavopāya

245. In mundane matters, one's feelings and thoughts are important. In spiritual matters, however, one must transcend thoughts and feelings in order to discover and recognize the Supreme Principle that is their source. If one contemplates the purpose of life, the question inevitably arises, "What is its origin?"

246. Some people think that life is merely entertainment, that it is meant for indulging in sense pleasures and obtaining wealth, fame, power and limitless enjoyments. Driven by the restlessness of the monkey-mind, they eat, drink, dance, jump around and ultimately destroy their priceless life. Then, crying out and weeping, they continually repent. They blame time, destiny, their parents, relatives and national policies. Finally, they become death's victims. This is a complete map of the journey through the world.

247. When a person is seeking knowledge or the origin of life and begins to understand its reality, he occasionally

loses interest in mundane matters. Sometimes he thinks that worldly knowledge may be an impediment to the realization of Truth. This kind of thinking occurs because of his partial or limited knowledge of the Truth.

If one does not have complete knowledge of the Truth and performs actions without proper understanding, attachment and aversion can arise. This happens because of ignorance of one's own Self and of the true nature of the world, as well as because of the wild, destructive dance of one's inner fantasies. The *Śivasūtras* describe this condition in the aphorism ज्ञानं बन्धः।[23] – "[Limited] knowledge is bondage."

248. Paramashiva or Parasamvit, who contains various powers and whose nature is Consciousness, is the Supreme Principle. It is described in the first of the *Śivasūtras*: चैतन्यमात्मा। – "The Self is Consciousness." In truth, there is nothing other than that conscious light, which is the Ultimate Reality. This world is the play of that Principle, the Universal Consciousness.

249. Paramashiva Himself, by contracting according to His own will, has brought about the effects of the three impurities – *āṇavamala*, *māyīyamala* and *kārmamala*.[24] This is His game, drama, entertainment, journey, picnic and sport. It is neither real nor unreal.

250. Enveloped in the three impurities, the individual soul falls under the influence of the letters, or sound-syllables, which are the basis of words. From these

23. *Śivasūtras*, 1.2.

24. See Glossary.

letters comes language, from language come ideas, and from ideas comes the understanding "I am imperfect." This notion brings about the limitation of one's power. Therefore this kind of understanding is bondage. Shaivism describes this state by saying, ज्ञानं बन्धः। and ज्ञानाधिष्ठानं मातृका।[25] – "Limited knowledge arises from the *mātṛkāśakti*."[26]

251. Many factors contribute to the functioning of a human being, including the body, the senses, the mind, and the various gross and subtle principles. The understanding derived from all these instruments and principles takes a form and, so that others can understand it, manifests outwardly as groups of letters in the form of language. These letters arise from a source known as the *mātṛkācakra*.[27]

252. A seeker who pursues the Truth knows that everything, from the gross body to the *mātṛkācakra*, is nothing but a group of powers, or *śaktis*. His main duty is to recognize the Supreme Principle, which is the source of this group of powers. It is not possible to recognize the Supreme Principle through the senses. The Supreme Light can be recognized only through the purified will-power. When one contemplates the Supreme Principle, one perceives that all the activities

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25. *Śivasūtras*, 1.4.

26. *Mātṛkāśakti* is the power of letters, the subtle vibration of Shakti that arises as the letters of the alphabet. It is the source of the entire inner experience of an individual. All the letters of the Sanskrit alphabet from *a* to *kṣa* are referred to as *mātṛkās*. However, the basic principle of *mātṛkā* applies equally to all languages.

27. The supreme power of Consciousness in its primal sound form from which all *mātṛkās* arise.

of the entire world occur because of the pulsation and play of Parashakti. By inwardly contemplating his identity with the Supreme Principle, a Siddha neither rejects nor hates the activities of the outer world. Instead, he participates in them fully.

253. One should always remember that a human being has four bodies. In the physical body, one experiences the waking state and performs mundane activities. Some of these activities are re-experienced in the subtle body in the dream state, but since this state lacks any independent content, the experiences in this state cannot be called real.

The goals and conflicts of the waking state are not perceived at all in the state of deep sleep because in that state there are neither feelings nor mental activity. This state lies beyond the dream state and corresponds to the third, or causal body.

254. The state that pertains to the fourth body is called *turīyā*. It is invaluable. In this state one recognizes one's Self, one's own true nature; this can be recognized only through inner experience, not through the senses. Trying to describe this state is like a mute person trying to describe the sweets he is eating. Jnaneshwar Maharaj said, "You can attain that state only by stealing it from all the senses."

255. The Self, one's own true nature, is essentially Consciousness, or God; for that reason, *iccha*, *jñāna* and *kriyā śaktis* exist in it. Through *icchāśakti* – the power of will – the bliss of the *turīyā* state can be recognized. It cannot be perceived through any other kind of

understanding. The bliss of *turīyā* exists within us at all times; it is that which makes us take interest in different things. To know the *turīyā* state is to realize the Truth. It is a sublime and blissful state.

256. A realized *yogī* assimilates this intense bliss by remaining in the *turīyā* state all the time. He himself becomes that bliss. He does not have to subdue his senses; where can the poor senses go to escape that all-pervasive ocean of bliss? By freeing himself from attachment and aversion and by detaching himself from praise and blame, that *yogī* experiences his own Self. Such a *yogī* is called Viresha, the lord of the senses. He experiences wonder at the adventure of the universe. His *icchāśakti* has transcended all limitations.

257. Through the understanding that he has gained from being centred in the Self, his former idea of duality, of "I" and "this", merges into the bliss of the Self. Through his *icchāśakti*, spontaneous knowledge of equality arises within. Such a *yogī* experiences the all-pervasive unity in himself and in everything that he perceives. He attains the power to create an inner world through his will. Various miraculous and supernatural powers come to him. By constantly pursuing the Supreme Principle, he experiences the divine I-consciousness that empowers the *mantra*. That power removes all bondage and establishes one in the *turīyā* state. It is also called Shakti or *mudrāvīrya*, that which dissolves bondage.

258. When, through the power of *icchāśakti*, one has the experience "I am not different from the Supreme Principle", this is called *śāṃbhavopāya*.

अकिञ्चिच्चिन्तकस्यैव गुरुणा प्रतिबोधतः।
यं समावेशमाप्नोति शाम्भवो ऽसावुदाहृतः॥[28]

Absorption in Shiva-consciousness comes to one whose mind has become free of thought as a result of an awakening by the Guru or through an intense spontaneous awakening.

In the *śāṃbhavopāya*, *sādhanā* and the goal of *sādhanā* are one; therefore this is also called the *abhedopāya*, or the non-dual means. Because in this *upāya* the Supreme can be attained through *icchāśakti*, it is sometimes referred to as the *icchopāya*, or the means of pure will. Primarily, the *sūtras* of the *śāṃbhavopāya* discuss such subjects as the nature of bondage, the four states (waking, dream, deep sleep and *turīyā*), the stages of *yoga*, the evolution of Consciousness, the bliss of *samādhi*, the acquisition of will-power, the upliftment of the world, and the attainment of the potency of the *mantra*.

259. Through the wisdom of the Shakti, activated by Shri Guru or through an intense spontaneous awakening, all thoughts cease. Such an experience is called the *śāṃbhava samāveśa* or the *śāṃbhavopāya*.

260. By pursuing unity through the *śāṃbhavopāya*, one sees the world as the play of the Self. Then wherever one looks, one sees only the play of Consciousness. One becomes like the *gopis* who said, "Wherever I look I see Shyam alone." In this state, wherever one looks one sees nothing that is different from Shiva. One understands that it is Shiva who has assumed different forms

28. Kshemaraja, *Śivasūtravimarśinī*.

within and without. He has become a man, a woman and every other thing. Shiva is omniscient, omnipotent and all-pervasive. He is the Supreme Principle. The experience that the world is the embodiment of Shiva is known as the *śāṃbhavopāya*.

261. The universe is a garden for us to roam in with love. It is not intended as a source of attachment, jealousy, hatred or anxiety. These only destroy our equanimity. Give up all desires. If something comes, let it come; if something goes, let it go. It is all Shiva's play. This is not a mere universe; it is the image of Him. Knowing it as Shiva, love it. Meditate on the awareness that all conscious beings as well as inert matter are Shiva. Having the knowledge of Shiva, understand that the world is the embodiment of Him. Take this kind of *saṃnyāsa*. Shiva alone exists everywhere. Muktananda, know that this is the *śāṃbhavopāya*.

11

Śāktopāya

262. There is only one Self in all human beings. However, the *upāyas*, or means of reaching that Self, are different. This is due to the three *guṇas*,[29] or qualities – *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (activity) and *tamas* (inertia) – as well as the fact that people have different temperaments, mental impurities, karmic impressions from countless lifetimes, and various kinds of understanding. In reality, all the *upāyas* are one. Their techniques vary to suit the needs of different individuals but they do not depart from their original purpose.

In *śāktopāya*, one's awareness and feeling are paramount because the *śāktopāya* manifests through them. भावे हि विद्यते देवः। – "God exists in the form of feeling." The *Bhagavadgītā* says, मद्भावा मानसा जाताः। – "The world exists in My feeling." The world is the embodiment of one's understanding. One's feeling and opinions are mental tendencies. According to the tendencies of one's mind, a particular person is one's husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, girlfriend,

29. According to the scriptures, every creature, object and state in the material universe is composed of these three basic qualities of nature, in permutation and combination.

boyfriend, Guru, disciple, Baba or companion. But once one's feeling for that person wanes, the mind withdraws from the relationship. When one's love diminishes one no longer recognizes that person. As far as one is concerned, the person whom one loved the most is dead while still alive. There are countless mental tendencies. Although they seem to be positive or negative when they arise, once they merge into Consciousness they become one with it. The place where the mental tendencies arise and become dual is the same place where they merge and become non-dual.

263. The main purpose of the *śāktopāya* is to obtain the experience of all-pervasive unity through the power of feeling. As one practises this *upāya*, one's thoughts gradually calm down and one rejects the dualistic tendencies that exist in the ordinary state.

264. In this *upāya* the mind is the instrument through which the Supreme Principle is pursued. The mind has the ability to erase an old way of looking at the world and to create a new relationship with a new world. *Mantra* is non-dual contemplation directed within. Therefore Shiva said, चित्तं मन्त्रः।[30] – "The mind is *mantra*" and चेत्यते विमृश्यते अनेन परं तत्त्वमिति चित्तम्।[31] – "The mind is that which illumines and understands the highest Principle." It merges into the Supreme Principle and leads to recognition of That.

A seeker worships a deity through *mantras*. There is no difference between the seeker, the *mantra* and the deity of the *mantra*. The main goal of the *śāktopāya* is

30. *Śivasūtras*, 2.1

31. Kshemaraja, *Śivasūtravimarśinī*, commentary on 2.1

to establish one in the awareness of the unity of these three. In the *śāktopāya* one attempts to merge into the Supreme Light. प्रयत्न: साधक: ।[32] – "Achievement comes through effort."

265. *Vidyā* is the highest knowledge of unity. Through this knowledge one enters the state of unity from that of duality. *Vidyā* does not belong to the realm of the B.A., M.A. or Ph.D., or to science or psychology. When a seeker develops the feeling that the groups of letters are not different from him but are in fact his own body, he experiences the entire universe pulsating in unity with the awareness of *pūrṇo 'ham* – "I am perfect." The pulsation of "I am the entire universe" is the awareness of *pūrṇo 'ham*. The *Upaniṣads* and other scriptures also call it the potency and secret of the *mantra*.

266. One who attains the potency of the *mantra* naturally gains some limited supernatural powers. If he becomes infatuated with them, he fails to pursue the pure knowledge of the Truth, the all-pervasive unity. He remains in the state of ignorance and forgets *pūrṇo 'ham*. Then the sense of duality and various strange thoughts arise along with his new world of supernatural powers and miracles. It becomes very difficult to escape from this world of miraculous powers. They are a great obstacle to one who wants to attain the all-pervasive unity.

267. Although a seeker may attain limited supernatural powers, he will make further progress only if he rejects these powers as worthless. Such understanding arises

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32. *Śivasūtras*, 2.2

through the grace of God and the Guru. In this way, he will experience the bliss of his own Self in the space of Consciousness. Shaivism calls this awakening of supreme bliss *mantraviryā*, the power of *mantra*, or *mūdraviryā*, the power behind Self-realization.

268. The grace of Shri Guru is the means of attaining the potency of the *mantra*. Here, "Guru" refers to the fifth of the five actions of God, that of grace bestowal. The Shakti comes from a Siddha Guru. Grace may be bestowed by a living Siddha or by one who is no longer in the physical body.

269. The Guru's grace is called *śaktipāt*. Through the power of the unfolding Shakti, a seeker loses the sense of duality that arises from the groups of letters. He experiences the potency of the *mantra*, which is all-pervasive unity. To one who understands the principle of *mātṛkā*, Parashakti gives worldly enjoyment as well as liberation. But when one fails to understand this principle, the *mātṛkāśakti*, appearing as subjects and objects, gives rise to joy, sorrow, fear, jealousy, enmity, agitation and envy. It makes one undergo worldly experiences. One who knows the secret of the *mātṛkāśakti* merges the gross and subtle universes into Consciousness. Such a seeker is without pride. His ego and pride have been burned in the fire of knowledge and only the awareness of *Śivo 'ham* – "I am Shiva" – remains.

270. The knowledge of his own true nature is the source of a *yogī's* contentment. One of the *Śivasūtras* is ज्ञानमन्नम् ।[33] – "Knowledge is food." Just as contentment

33. *Śivasūtras*, 2.9.

is derived from food, it also comes from knowledge; however, knowledge other than that of the Self is mediocre. Another *sūtra* is विस्मयो योगभूमिका: ।[34] – "The stages of *yoga* are filled with amazing phenomena." Although there are countless stages of *yoga*, the scriptural authors emphasized one hundred and twelve. The knowledge of them fills one with amazement.

271. Because a seeker may obtain supernatural powers when he attains the knowledge of his own true nature, he should constantly be vigilant. If he forgets his own Self through ego, he ultimately brings about his downfall. I have seen this happen with many people. These days many *āśramas* and *gurus* are falling. The reason for this is partial knowledge and licentiousness. Through the use of intoxicants, things happen that should not happen. Therefore one should be very careful about choosing a *guru* or guide. A seeker should not have blind faith.

The purity of a *guru* should always uplift his disciples. Some people become *gurus*, teach a hundred and eight different therapies, and lead a completely wanton life without self-control or discipline. A seeker should evaluate such teachers. How can the spiritual path become a haven for therapies? An incomplete teacher who is pure and ethical and who puts his knowledge into practice is far better than an undisciplined person who poses as a perfect *guru*.

272. Through dualistic knowledge one becomes infatuated with supernatural powers. Therefore one should always be careful; one should always contemplate the all-pervasive unity.

34. *Śivasūtras*, 1.12.

273. The *śāktopāya* is a means of transcending worldly existence. It is a technique for pursuing a particular mental awareness arising from the groups of syllables. Groups of syllables contain letters, words and sentences and are forever ready to conceal a seeker's true nature. Opinions and thoughts arise from groups of letters; attachment and aversion spring from groups of thoughts. But, thoughts can also lead to the thought-free state.

274. Limitless powers are created by groups of letters. Bondage is the failure to realize the influence of the *śakticakra*, the powers of the groups of letters. To understand the powers of the letters is to attain everything. When one contemplates and understands isolated thoughts and makes an effort to pursue unity, this *upāya* is known as the *jñānopāya*. When one knows the mighty power that is non-dual and the basis of all thought, whether good or bad, this *upāya* is known as the *śāktopāya*. Through the means of dualistic knowledge, knowledge of unity is attained. For that reason, this means is also called *bhedābhedopāya*, the dual/non-dual means.

275. Parashakti cannot be revealed by articulated speech, but She can be seen as a result of one-pointed contemplation and experienced through the oneness brought about by the *śāktopāya*. This union or absorption comes as a result of pursuing Her.

उच्चाररहितवस्तुं चेतसैव विचिन्तयन्।
यं समावेशमाप्नोति शाक्तः सो ऽत्राभिधीयते।[35]

35. *Mālinīvijayatantra.*

> When a seeker becomes totally absorbed in the true Principle, which is beyond both subtle and articulated speech, that oneness is called *śāktasamāveśa* or *śāktopāya*.

The *śāktopāya* is the process by which the mind and intellect completely merge into the inner Self.

276. This section discusses the contemplation of the Supreme Principle; the pursuit of inner unity; the oneness of the *mantra*, the deity of the *mantra*, and the seeker; the effort made to unfold one's essential nature; the potency and secret of the *mantra*; the limited supernatural powers that arise spontaneously along with the obstacles they create; the bliss of *samādhi* that arises by the rejection of those powers; the nature of this *upāya*; the knowledge of the *mātṛkā-cakra*; the pursuit of knowledge of the nature of the universe; the contemplation and knowledge of one's own true nature; and the crisis a person goes through if he is not vigilant after attaining supernatural powers. The *śāktopāya* enables a person to become one with the Truth.

277. The discussion of Shaivism always brings joy. By granting the knowledge of the Self, Shaivism destroys ignorance. It takes one across the ocean of the world in the boat of equality.

12

Āṇavopāya

278. The third section of the *Śivasūtras* on the *āṇavopāya* is longer than the sections on both the *śāṃbhavopāya* and the *śāktopāya* combined. In addition, the *āṇavopāya* has a specific quality: everyone can follow this path. Some portions of it resemble the *śāktopāya*. By following the *āṇavopāya*, a seeker progresses gradually. The section dealing with *āṇavopāya* consists of forty-five *sūtras*. It is lengthy so that ordinary people will be able to understand this *upāya*.

> उच्चारकरणध्यानवर्णस्थानप्रकल्पनैः।
> यो भवेत्तु समावेशः सम्यगाणव उच्यते।[36]
>
> In *āṇavopāya*, the perfect absorption into the essential divine Self is achieved through methods known as *ucchāra, karaṇa, dhyāna, varṇa,* and *sthānakalpanā.*

Ucchāra is the stilling of the *prāṇa* through the practice of *so 'ham mantra*. By stilling the *prāṇa* through various means, one experiences different kinds of bliss: *nijānanda*, the bliss of one's own Self; *nirānanda*,

36. *Mālinīvijayatantra.*

transcendental bliss; *parānanda*, supreme bliss; *brahmānanda*, the bliss of the Absolute; *mahānanda*, great bliss; *cidānanda*, the bliss of Consciousness; *jagadānanda*, the bliss of the world. All these are included within *ucchāra*. Among all the types of *prāṇāyāma*, the natural one is *so 'ham*. It is the greatest centring technique; through it comes the complete attainment of *pūrṇānanda*, perfect bliss.

Karaṇa is the practice of contemplating the subtle and gross bodies as a replica of the cosmos. This is possible only through *śaktipāta*.

Varṇa refers to *nādānusandhāna*, the hearing of divine sounds when the *prāṇa* is retained in the *sahasrāra*, or crown of the head. *Yogīs* experience ten different divine sounds. This is possible only through *dhyāna* (meditation).

Sthānakalpanā refers to centring the mind on the breath, the body or objects outside the body. The highest centring technique is the awareness that whatever exists in this world is a play of the Universal Consciousness.

279. A being who has become all-pervasive is not limited by birth and death, pain and pleasure, the endless rounds of incarnation in different planes, or the agitation caused by changes. However, one who has given up his all-pervasive nature and become limited undergoes pain and affliction. As long as he remains limited this will continue to happen. Pain and affliction are experienced through the body and senses, which are subject to the three *guṇas* – *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. This kind of experience is bondage and is the source of sorrow and dryness. A bound individual does not fully understand the body, *prāṇa* or senses, through which he undergoes

pain and pleasure. In other words, he lacks the knowledge of his own Self. He sees no diffe-rence between his true nature and pain and pleasure. This is ignorance, bondage and lack of discrimination.

280. The physical body, which is made of the five elements, should be fully understood; so should the *puryaṣṭaka*, or subtle body, which is composed of the five *tanmātras*, or rudimentary elements, along with the mind, ego and intellect. One should also understand the gross and subtle principles from Shiva to the earth.

Everyone experiences one object as different from another. However, by understanding the Guru's instructions and by contemplation, one comes to perceive unity in duality. As one's knowledge evolves and one's *sādhanā* matures, one experiences the state of unity. In the same way, one should meditate and merge the mundane and supramundane paths, called *bhuvana adhvā, tattvādhvā, kalādhvā* and so on, with pure Consciousness.[37] This is the way to become free from bondage.

These techniques bring about supernatural powers, such as *nāḍīsaṃhāra* (dissolution of the *prāṇa* flowing through the nasal passages), *bhūtajaya* (control of the elements), *bhūtakaivalya* (withdrawal of the mind from the elements) and *bhūtapṛthaktva* (separation from the elements).

In *nāḍīsaṃhāra*, the *nāḍīs* referred to are the passages through which the inbreath and the outbreath pass. Through the natural *yoga* of *so 'ham*, *prāṇāyāma* spontaneously takes place, the *nāḍīs* are purified within and the *suṣumnā* unfolds. Through *prāṇāyāma*, the *prāṇa* becomes still in the inner *dvādaśānta* (the space

37. See Glossary for *bhuvanādhvā*, etc.

located at a distance of twelve fingers from the tip of the nose where the breath merges in the heart) and the outer *dvādaśānta* (the point located at a distance of twelve fingers from the tip of the nose where the breath merges outside). In this way, one becomes centred.

In the centring technique of *bhūtajaya*, one attains mastery over the elements. *Bhūtakaivalya* comes about when, as a result of *śaktipāta*, the *prāṇa* becomes still in the heart during meditation. The *prāṇa* is controlled by the mind. When the mind turns away from sensory stimuli and stabilizes in the navel, it becomes quiet. This is called the power of withdrawal of the mind from objects.

In *bhūtapṛthaktva*, one should become separate from all the elements and the tendencies of the mind should become still. As a *yogī* experiences both of these, he transcends all tendencies and attains the freedom of his own true nature. In this way, by eliminating ignorance, he attains *sahajavidyā*, the natural awareness that roots out all the impressions left by the supernatural powers. *Sahajavidyā* and *śuddhavidyā*, pure awareness, are one and the same.

According to Shaivism, the universe is the form of Shakti, the Supreme Principle. Shiva and Shakti are one; they are not separate. A *yogī* who has attained *sahajavidyā* considers the universe to be the light of his own Self, like the light produced by a flame. The knowledge of one's own true nature (*aham*, "I") and the knowledge of the universe (*idam*, "this") merge into all-pervasive unity. This is the understanding that one should have. The knowledge of "I" is like a flame, and the knowledge of "this" is like its light, which spreads everywhere equally.

A seeker in whom the knowledge of the Self is strong performs all his various actions in the realm of duality like an actor or actress who displays different feelings and emotions in a play. Just as these limited feelings and expressions are reserved for the stage, so this individual's state of bondage is simply a limitation of his true nature. The senses are the audience, but the knowledge of the Truth is his understanding of the play. Through the vibration of his senses, he performs in the drama of the world, which is filled with mundane activities.

When he feels that he is an individual, he is limited like an actor in a play. When he attains the all-pervasive unity through the evolution of his knowledge into *sahajavidyā*, he becomes independent. But even when he becomes free, he should continually meditate on Parashakti, which ceaselessly vibrates and which is the source of the universe. Through the power of the touch of a *śākta* (one who possesses Shakti), he is infused with bliss. From this, he directly experiences the state of Shiva, the awareness of Shiva, and the manifest Self.

281. If the knowledge of *sahajavidyā* has not been tainted, there can be no rebirth. *Sahajavidyā* is an understanding. Just as there is the understanding "I am the body", so *sahajavidyā* is the spontaneous and effortless awareness "I am Paramashiva". Even after a seeker experiences the state of *sahajavidyā*, if he fails to maintain that awareness, he becomes bound once again. If a seeker acquires a bit of verbal knowledge and then gives up his *sādhanā* to become a guru, this brings misfortune.

The Goddess Parashakti first takes the forms of *icchāśakti*, *jñānaśakti* and *kriyāśakti*, the powers of will, knowledge and action. Then She undergoes a transformation and becomes vowels, consonants and

classified and unclassified letters. The Shakti, becoming *māṭṛkā*, takes the form of the letters from *a* to *kṣa*, giving rise to positive and negative feelings. Through its power, this newborn *śakti* conceals the unity of Self-awareness. Then it gives rise to its friends – attachment, aversion, desire and craving for sense pleasures – and alters a seeker's direction. While deluding the seeker into feeling that he is being led along a true path to the perfect bliss of the Self, it takes him to the limited bliss of sense pleasures. It guides seekers, *gurus*, *bhagavāns* and many others in the wrong direction. That is why, even after a seeker attains Siddhahood, he should be vigilant and always remain in *sahajavidyā*.

A person should make his contemplation of the *turīyā* state permeate his waking, dream and deep sleep states like oil spreading over water. He should transcend the breathing process of inhalation and exhalation and all other external manifestations and become absorbed in the knowledge of the Supreme Principle. He should maintain equal vision in the face of all duality, whether internal or external. To see equality everywhere is the outlook of Shiva.

282. When a seeker is trying to attain the *turīyā* state, the tendency to perceive duality arises from time to time because of his old impressions and desires. He should assimilate all these impressions through practice of the awareness of the unity to be attained in the *turīyā* state. When he does that, शिवतुल्यो जायते।[38] – "He becomes like Shiva." Then he is Shiva while in the body and after leaving the body.

As long as a person is in the body, he should pursue his own true nature as resolutely as if he were observing

38. *Śivaśūtras*, 3.25

a vow. A firm vow is never broken under any circumstances. The moment he fulfils his staunch vow of *sahajavidyā* he becomes Shiva. Then everything he says is *mantra* repetition; whatever he gives is knowledge of the Self. Such a person can awaken knowledge in others with his own power. He sees the world as the play of his own *śakti*. For him, creation, sustenance and dissolution are like the blinking of an eye. Although he pursues the supreme I-consciousness of the *turīyā* state, he rejects neither the worldly nor the spiritual life. For him, सर्वं शिवमयं जगत् । – "The world is the embodiment of Shiva."

283. A seeker who pursues the knowledge of the perfect I-consciousness through the *ānavopāya* becomes one with the Supreme Consciousness and considers pain and pleasure to be separate from him. He feels that the pain he undergoes does not belong to him. If he has this kind of detachment, he becomes established in his real Self. If he fails to achieve this, he becomes the embodiment of delusion, involved in good and bad deeds.

Through the power of *sādhanā*, a seeker experiences pure knowledge. He attains the power to form a new creation. What is night for an owl is day for a crow. That which is a mere world for a materialistic person is Kailasa, the abode of God, for a Shiva *yogī*. For him, everything becomes the embodiment of Shiva. Through the power of his knowledge of the Truth, he gives a new direction to the world.

284. A *yogī* who follows the *āṇavopāya* takes delight in the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe. He can manipulate his body, mind and senses as he pleases. His limited identification as an individual dissolves. Although he has a physical body, he is equal

to Shiva. With his own free power of will he remains in contact with his *prāṇaśakti*, the vital force, and other powers. He needs no other *sādhanā*. His primary nature is the knowledge of Consciousness.

285. The third section of the *Śivasūtras* describes the limited condition of the bound soul, bondage, *māyā*, delusion, the sheaths or coverings of the individual soul, and *sahajavidyā*, the spontaneous awareness. It also discusses the detachment of the individual soul, his relationship with the senses, his awareness of freedom, the state of *samādhi*, and the cessation of rebirth. In addition, it deals with the bondage that arises from the letters of the alphabet as well as with the *turīyā* state, which is its opposite. It explains the intermediate stages that exist as long as a seeker's bondage has not yet been completely eradicated, and discusses how Siddhahood makes him equal to Shiva.

As long as a Siddha lives, his presence offers infinite benefit to the world. In this world such a great being is a haven of peace for tormented souls. He is the physician who cures the disease of worldliness. He is the witness of the bliss of knowledge.

286. The excellence of his awareness is extraordinary. Because he is using the elements merely as a covering, he remains equal to the Lord of all beings. नैसर्गिकः प्राणसम्बन्धः।[39] – "He has a natural link with the *prāṇaśakti*."

The third section of the *Śivasūtras* also explains at length how the *prāṇa* is separated from the physical body at death.

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39. *Śivasūtras*, 3.43.

13

Summary of the Upāyas

287. The *śāṃbhavopāya*, which is also known as *icchā upāya* or *abhedopāya*, involves experiencing one's own true nature through *icchāśakti*, or the power of will. This *śakti* is one of the powers of Consciousness, like *jñānaśakti* and *kriyāśakti*. In *śāṃbhavopāya* there is no need for mental or intellectual activity.

The *śāktopāya*, *bhedābhedopāya* or *jñānopāya* involve attaining oneness with Shiva by contemplating the thoughts of the mind. One regards the groups of letters that cause these thoughts as nothing other than forms of Shakti, the essence of the universe.

288. The *āṇavopāya* is ordinarily called the *bhedopāya*, the dualistic path, but in actuality it is also *abhedopāya*, a non-dual path, because it leads to unity. It involves the use of the body, mind, intellect, senses and *prāṇa-śakti*. By pursuing the knowledge of the Truth through *japa* and meditation, a person becomes one with Shiva and attains peace of mind.

289. So we have come to know something of the three *upāyas*. These means of *sādhanā* help us to realize Shiva.

290. Shiva, the Self of all, has already been attained. These *upāyas* exist not to make us attain the Self, but to remove our forgetfulness, our errors and our ignorance of that Self. Everyone has already attained the Self but is unaware of it. The way to Self-realization is the recognition of one's own Self as Shiva, and this occurs through the *upāyas*. You are perfect, you have come from perfection, you live in perfection, and this perfection is the Supreme Truth.

291. There is a fourth *upāya*, which is called the *anupāya*. It is sublime, subtle and profound. This *upāya* is for superior candidates, intense seekers who are fully ripe. In this *upāya*, a seeker's worthiness is paramount, and no actions, rituals or meditation are needed. Either by simply hearing the Guru's instructions or through scriptural proofs, one immediately and with unshakeable faith recognizes the Shiva Principle, and becomes completely firm in it. If one recognizes gold once, one does not have to study it over and over again; it is not difficult to identify it. We do not need to know the scriptures to recognize our parents. Once our mother shows us who our father is, we do not have to meditate on him incessantly or repeat the *mantra* of his name – we always know him. In the same way, at the precise moment when one recognizes the inner Consciousness as *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*,[40] one becomes perfect. This is the *anupāya* or the *gurukṛpopāya*, the path of Guru's grace. This *upāya* depends on a seeker's worthiness.

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40. *Prakāśa* and *vimarśa* are the two aspects of Paramashiva. *Prakāśa* is Shiva, the static aspect, which is of the nature of light. *Vimarśa* is the dynamic aspect, or Shakti, through which Paramashiva is able to survey Himself. See Glossary for more details.

14

Paramashiva: The Supreme Consciousness

292. Shaivism reveals its essence in the statement चैतन्यमात्मा।[41] — "The Self is Consciousness." Consciousness is the perfect Principle, which is all-pervasive. Since it is all-pervasive, nothing can be added to it. It lacks nothing, nor does it have an excess of anything. Shiva, who is complete and exists everywhere, is *caitanyamātmā*. Paramashiva is the waveless ocean of Consciousness. Through His play, that serene ocean has become the universe of *grāhaka*, the perceiver, and *grāhya*, the perceived. By becoming the thirty-six *tattvas*,[42] or principles, that Consciousness gives rise to the universe and its activities.

This universe of ordinary experience contains infinite permutations of Consciousness, such as *nīla*, *sukha*,

41. *Śivasūtras*, 1.1.

42. Shaivism describes thirty-six categories, called *tattvas*, to explain the stages of manifestation of the universe. *Tattva*, which is loosely translated as "principle", means that which is the essence of each stage of manifestation. See Glossary for more details.

deha and *prāṇa*. *Nīla*, the colour blue, is among the countless colours and forms that make up the objects perceived through the outer senses. *Sukha*, pleasure, is one of the many experiences of the inner senses. *Deha*, the body, is the basis of both inner and outer experiences. *Prāṇa*, the vital force, is one of the many conscious powers that make the body perform actions. In this way, the universe is full of numerous unique forms.

For practical purposes, the universe is divided into four categories: the knower, the means of knowing, the objects known and knowledge. In scriptural language these are called *pramātṛ*, *pramāna*, *prameya* and *pramiti*. *Pramātṛ* is the limited, individual soul. He understands the nature and activities of the universe through *pramāna*, the different ways of knowing. Whatever he cannot understand through direct perception, he experiences through the other *pramānas*, such as inference and scriptural authority. The universe is *prameya*, and his right understanding of the universe is *pramiti*.

The experience of the waveless Consciousness does not have these categories. It is Paramashiva, *caitanyamātmā*. Since the universe is not different from Him, there are no means separate from Him by which to know Him. उपायजालं न शिवं प्रकाशयेत् ।[43] — "No means can illumine Shiva." Shiva is both the means and the end. Just as a torch illumines everything in a darkened room, it also illumines itself. No other light is needed to reveal light; it reveals itself and other objects as well. Similarly, Consciousness reveals its own nature and also gives the knowledge of other objects.

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43. Abhinavagupta, *Tantrasāra*.

293. Consciousness is both self-luminous and independent. It encompasses all powers and is the cause of everything. It is called Parasamvit, Paramashiva and Chaitanya. Paramashiva is as serene as a still ocean. In this state, Shiva is transcendental. He is always filled with bliss. In His immanent aspect, through the independent power of His supreme I-consciousness, Paramashiva becomes the thirty-six *tattvas*, or principles, and reveals the seven experiencers[44] from within Himself.

294. Paramashiva, the Self of all, exists as the universe in its infinite forms. It is His play. The five powers—*cit*, *ānanda*, *icchā*, *jñāna* and *kriyā*—continually dwell in Him, whether He is in His transcendental or His immanent aspect. Through His power of illumination, *citśakti*, Paramashiva is self-luminous and wholly independent. Through *ānandaśakti*, He has the ability to experience bliss within Himself without any external cause; He is the embodiment of supreme bliss. Because of *icchāśakti*, His will-power, He can do anything in a miraculous way without opposition and with firm resolution. Through his power of knowledge, *jñānaśakti*, He can assimilate into Himself both the perceiver and the perceived. With His power of action, *kriyāśakti*, He can create objects of various forms.

With these five powers He continually performs five actions: creation, sustenance, dissolution, concealment and bestowal of grace. Creation refers to the creation of the universe. Sustenance means the maintenance of this creation. Dissolution is the absorption of the

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44. The names given to the experiencer at different levels of consciousness. The seven experiencers begin with Shiva at the highest level and descend to the *sakala* (bound individual soul) at the lowest level.

creation into Himself. Concealment is the state in which the creation remains within Him in a potential form before being remembered or recreated. Bestowal of grace refers to the complete merging of the creation into the Universal Consciousness, or Chiti, eradicating all impressions and all opportunities for subsequent remembrance.

In this way, Paramashiva is complete and independent and possesses five powers and five actions. He is both transcendent and immanent, the totality of the bliss of Consciousness, the constant Knower. Paramashiva is self-luminous and is the root cause of the universe. Out of His own being He manifests this universe full of multiplicity and countless forms, yet remains the embodiment of Consciousness. He is the foundation of the world. Although the manifold universe issues forth from Shiva, His true nature undergoes no change. It neither decreases nor increases. He is supremely pure.

15

God's Independent and Inseparable Shakti

295. Just as gentle waves arise on the surface of the ocean, a throb or movement arises in the ocean of Consciousness, and this throb is called Shakti or Chitshakti. This same Shakti expands in three forms: *icchā*, *jñāna* and *kriyā*. That first movement in Consciousness is called *spanda*, *sphurattā* or *unmeśa*. From this initial throb comes the creation of the cosmos, in which Shakti becomes the thirty-six *tattvas*, the principles from Shiva to the earth. There is no difference between the two *tattvas* of Shiva and Shakti, nor is there any difference between the perceiver and the perceived. In the context of the thirty-six principles, Shiva is considered the first principle. *Icchā*, *jñāna* and *kriyā* manifest from the Shakti, or second principle. The perceiver and the perceived originate in the third principle, Sadashiva. The various classes of the perceived come into existence from the other principles of creation. The three *śaktis*, *icchā*, *jñāna* and *kriyā*, become the universe and encompass all duality.

The miracle of Chitshakti is Her extraordinary activity of revealing the universe of the perceiver and the perceived and then reabsorbing it into Herself. Chitshakti is uniquely independent. She reabsorbs the outer universe and can manifest it in countless ways whenever She desires. Chitshakti is astonishing. She can accomplish anything and become anything. She is also known as Kundalini. She is the Siddha Yogini who performs actions spontaneously. She is the grace-bestowing power of God, which resides in the Guru. She makes inner *kriyās* take place. She pervades everyone in the world equally but remains pure and different from all. She is called Shive. Her blessing is the perpetual and sublime bliss of the *yogīs*. In the form of this supreme bliss, She dwells in the hearts of all as the Self.

Chitshakti has no limitations of space, time or object. However, the universe that arises from Her has those limitations, which make it possible for all activities to go on within it. Although this is so, the universe is still not different from Shiva. The world is the embodiment of Shiva.

296. In order to complete the task of the all-encompassing expansion of the universe of sound and matter, the currents of the same Parameshwari Shakti keep expanding in forms such as *mātṛkās*; the presiding deities of the eight classes of letters, namely, Yogishwari, Brahmi, Maheshwari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Aindri, Kaumari and Chamunda; and the *śaktis* that preside over the inner psychic instruments and the outer sense organs, namely, Bhuchari, Dikchari and Gochari. Then She flows out as the *prāṇa*, the intellect, the four psychic

instruments,[45] the five senses of perception,[46] the five powers of action and all the elements.[47]

The point of stating this is to emphasize that all the countless objects of the universe from Brahma to a blade of grass, which are manifest and subject to experience, are nothing but Shiva. The world is the embodiment of Shiva. All these forms are streams of the infinite Shakti of the Supreme. The scriptural name for these limitless currents of Shakti is the *śakticakra*. The *śakticakra* is full of glory. This glory of the Lord is the sign of His independent power to create or not create anything or to change anything.

45. Mind, subsconscious mind, intellect and ego.

46. Seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and smelling.

47. Ether, air, fire, water and earth.

16

Ābhāsavāda: The Theory of Manifestation

297. The self-luminous Paramashiva is the cause of the universe. He is the embodiment of Consciousness, the substratum of all. Out of His own being He has manifested this universe filled with multiplicity. But although the universe issues forth from Shiva, His true nature does not undergo any change; it neither decreases nor increases. In Shaivism, this process of manifestation is discussed according to *ābhāsavāda*, or the theory of manifestation.

The root of the word *ābhāsa* is *bhā*, which means *dīptau*, to shine forth. Whether one has an actual object or simply the knowledge of an object, both come into existence in the perfection of their own individuality through the process of manifestation called *ābhāsa*.

Under *ābhāsavāda*, two points are discussed: firstly, how the experience of our inner world is transformed into the experience of the outer world, and secondly, the objects that we experience in the external world. For example, when we want an object, we obtain it by

saying its name. In this way, our inner experience changes into the actual outer experience of the object. Similarly, the universe consists of many *ābhāsas* or manifestations of Shiva, both within and without. The nature of Shiva neither gains nor loses anything from these *ābhāsas*. Moreover, they remain separate from each other although they are one in Him.

298. Even without concerning ourselves with outer objects, we can understand the subject of *ābhāsas* by examining our own inner experience. Our understandings arise from one another. So many of our understandings of different things lie hidden, to be revealed when they are triggered by events or thoughts. We say, "I saw, I heard, I knew", and thus the I-principle always remains one with our experience. It never becomes separate from it. All our understandings branch out with this I-principle as their basis. These different understandings, which come and go, are our *ābhāsas*, our manifestations. But no matter how many thoughts arise, the I-principle does not change. It neither increases nor decreases.

299. In the *ābhāsavāda*, the theory of manifestation, we discover another extraordinary fact. In our understanding of even one object, there are many *ābhāsas*. Sometimes we perceive an object as one unit but simultaneously see it as having many different aspects. We are perceiving the "concealed" aspects of that object. For example, suppose that someone is looking at a book. If he does not think much about it, he simply considers it to be a book. This is the *viśiṣṭha ābhāsa*, its generalized or unified manifestation. Then he perceives the different

aspects of the book – its subject matter, print, language, the reason why he is reading and so on. These are all different *ābhāsas*. From a non-dual viewpoint he sees the book as a book, but from an analytical viewpoint he sees it as being composed of different parts.

In all our activities we perceive an object from one point of view as a unit and from another point of view as being composed of differences. In this way, every object appears as both unity and diversity. No matter how many contradictions or dissimilarities an object may contain, they do not interfere with our overall understanding of that object. Similarly, an outer object, the understanding of that object, the understanding that comes from language, the knowledge of the empirical world, and the knowledge that lies beyond the realm of the senses are all *ābhāsas*. These *ābhāsas* exist in the outer world and in the experience of the inner world, without intermingling. They always remain individual and separate from each other. No matter how complex or different these *ābhāsas* may be, the I-principle is not altered. It neither gains nor loses anything.

In this way, although Shiva manifests the universe in multiplicity, His true nature is unchanging. He always remains complete. The universe is Shiva's *ābhāsa*, just as all the things that we understand are our *ābhāsas*. The *ābhāsavāda* is an important concept in Shaivism.

300. We describe an object by saying, "This is of a certain type." "This" indicates its nature; "a certain type" indicates its qualities. For example, imagine that there is an object lying on a table. First we see it as *idam*, "this." Then we see its qualities and nature and we say, "This is a pencil." Although the qualities and names

may vary, "this-ness" is common to all things. Shiva pervades all the activities of the universe as *idam*. The universe is His *ābhāsa*. All the new things that appear are revealed by His *citśakti*. The great being Utpalacharya said in the *Īśvara Pratyabhijña* that whatever exists in this world is Shiva's *ābhāsa*.

17

Bimbapratibimbanyāya: The Theory of an Object and Its Reflection

301. निर्मले मुकुरे यद्वद् भान्ति भूमिजलादयः।
आमिश्रास्तद्वदेकस्मिन् चिन्मात्रे विश्ववृत्तयः॥[48]

Just as earth, water and so on, are reflected in a clear mirror without intermingling, in the same way the entire world is reflected in one God, the embodiment of Consciousness.

Everything in the universe is reflected in pure Chiti, yet all these objects always remain separate from each other.

302. A reflection appears in a mirror or on a clear surface. The mirror and the object reflected in it are different from each other, although they do not appear to be so. Even if a large object is reflected in a small

48. Abhinavagupta, *Tantraloka.*

mirror, the mirror does not undergo any change; its size remains the same. Moreover, even if many objects are reflected in a mirror, they do not intermingle with one another. For example, even though fire and cotton may be reflected simultaneously in the same mirror, the cotton in the mirror does not burn. When a cow and a tiger are reflected in a mirror, the cow is not afraid of the tiger and the tiger does not attack the cow. Since only the forms of objects are seen in the mirror, they do not intermingle with one another. Moreover, in order for there to be a reflection, the reflecting surface must be clear. The clearer the surface is, the clearer the reflection will be.

303. There is another requirement. If something is to be reflected, there must be an object, and that object must have a form. Formless space cannot be reflected.

304. As was mentioned earlier, wherever there is clarity an object can be reflected. We see our face in a mirror but we cannot see the mirror in our face. Therefore we can say that the face lacks the clarity to reflect. This is an analogy of the relationship between the external world and God: God reveals the world, but the world cannot reveal God. Of course, the clearer a surface is, the brighter the reflection will be. In the same way, the clearer our heart becomes, the brighter will be the reflection of Shiva.

305. The world that we experience is a conglomeration of five elements. The human body is a microcosm composed of these five elements, and all the objects of the world have sprung from them. The five elements have

five qualities: sound, touch, form, taste and smell. Every material object has these five qualities. A person has five senses to perceive and reflect the corresponding qualities. Sound is reflected in the ears, touch in the skin, form in the eyes, taste in the tongue, and smell in the nose; however, the senses do not have the power to perceive them independently. For this, the senses need the help of the four psychic instruments as well as of Chiti Shakti. As the strength of the senses is increased, objects are reflected and perceived more clearly and in finer detail. People who have expanded their sensory capacity and the depth of their feeling through *sādhanā* have sharper and clearer sense perception than most people. Such beings are called *yogīs*.

306. The entire universe is concealed in the supreme space of God. Similarly, all tendencies born of the senses are hidden in the space of an individual's consciousness. The principle of *bimbapratibimba* — an object and its reflection — holds true for God as well as for a human being and his sense perceptions.

There is another point of interest: When we use the analogy of an object and its reflection, we speak of a mirror as the basis for the reflection. That which is being reflected is separate from the mirror but when it is seen, it is called a reflection. So three things are involved: an object, its reflection and a mirror. However, the principle of an object and its reflection is different when applied to God and the universe. In this case there are not three separate entities. Shiva, or Consciousness, is all three — the object, the reflecting instrument and the reflection. Shiva is the object and the world is His reflection.

307. Because a crystal is completely clear, it can reflect anything anywhere. Similarly, since Consciousness is eternally pure it has the ability to reflect forms, taste and so on. It can also reflect the specific qualities of objects, such as heaviness or lightness. This reflection happens both internally and externally. When external objects are reflected through the senses, we become either happy or unhappy. When we remember something from within, we also experience either happiness or unhappiness. When something is reflected through the outer senses, the sensory perception produces a subtle vibration. In the same way, the happiness or unhappiness arising within produces a vibration. This inner vibration is *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*. If there is no vibration in our physical body or in our feelings, there can be no inner experience.

308. The pain and pleasure that arise in our lives are experienced in two ways: they may arise either through inner remembrance or through the perception of outer objects. The latter occurs when the senses come in contact with their objects. If we think about the pain and pleasure that arise in these two ways, we realize that they occur because of the vibration produced by our sensory perception.

Pain and pleasure are reflections of some of the five qualities of the elements. These reflections cause a vibration in our sensory perception, which in turn produces involvements such as anger and desire. This is our experience. Once the tendencies that arise in this way merge back into Chiti, there is no longer any experience of pain or pleasure. To experience them anew, we have to remember them or once again be in

contact with external objects. An enlightened being does not become attached to momentary pain or pleasure. He realizes that they are merely reflections. The *Bhagavadgītā* says:

> मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः।
> आगमापायिनो ऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत॥[49]
>
> O son of Kunti, the contacts of the senses with their objects, which cause heat and cold, pleasure and pain, have a beginning and an end. They are impermanent. Endure them bravely, O Arjuna.

As long as the senses are not in contact with external objects, we do not experience pleasure or pain. Even if they come in contact with their objects, we experience neither pleasure nor pain if the perception and the experience merge into Chiti. However, in the intermediate stage before the perception merges into Chiti, we still experience pleasure or pain.

309. By understanding the principle of *bimbapratibimba*, the object and its reflection, we understand the true nature of pain and pleasure and attain peace.

310. Everything that we know is simply a reflection. Whether it is an inner experience or the perception of outer objects, it cannot be anything other than a reflection. By contemplating these reflections, which are the source of duality, we understand the difference between them and the experience of our own true

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49. *Bhagavadgītā*, 2.14.

nature, which leads to all-pervasive unity. The understanding of the principle of *bimbapratibimba* is very helpful in attaining this experience. Through it we learn to reject reflections, which are the cause of pain. When we have firm faith that the universe is reflected in Chiti, our attachment and aversion disappear into Consciousness. Then we attain the bliss of Consciousness.

311. *Bimbapratibimba* is one of the most beautiful principles of Shaivism. The universe is a reflection in Paramashiva, who is Sacchidananda. *Bimba* is *pratibimba*; the object and its reflection are identical. Shiva is in the world and the world is Shiva. Shiva and the world are not two but one. The principle of *bimbapratibimba* is true knowledge. We have already attained Shivahood and Shiva Himself. The Shaiva philosophy is concerned with how to make this experience manifest.

18

The Kingdom of Vikalpa

312. विविधा कल्पः विकल्पाः। — "*Vikalpas* are various kinds of thoughts and fantasies." We have various kinds of understanding. Moreover, each kind of understanding is a complete unit within itself. In technical language, the different kinds of understanding are called *vikalpas*. These mental constructs have innumerable progeny, which take birth and then die instantly. All the various understandings of the principles from Shiva to the earth are *vikalpas*. Without duality there is no *vikalpa*. Duality is the birthplace of *vikalpa*.

द्वितियाद्वै भवं भवति। — "Fear arises because of duality." The *Upaniṣads* say that to harbour the idea of "others" is to experience fear. All ideas such as "I and mine", "his and theirs", and "I am different from others" exist because of the power of *vikalpa*. If there is no thought in one's mental world, that state is called *nirvikalpa*, or thought-free.

स्वानुभूतिरसावेशाद् दृश्यशब्दावुपेक्ष्य तु।
निर्विकल्पः समाधिः स्यान्निवातस्थलदीपवत् ॥[50]

50. Shankaracharya, *Vākyasudhā*, 26.

> When a seeker experiences the bliss of his own true nature, he ignores what is seen and heard and stills his mind like a flame where there is no wind. This is called *nirvikalpa samādhi*.

Learned men say that any state that is still confined within space, time and object is classified as *vikalpa*. A state that is free of these things is *nirvikalpa*. Because of the current of *vikalpa*, Shakti contracts and bondage comes into existence. In this state, the power of *vikalpa* is the cause of pain and pleasure, attachment and aversion. Because *vikalpa* is incredibly powerful, it is the cause of limitless complications. One can count external objects but one cannot count *vikalpas*. From one *vikalpa* arises another of the same kind. Many *vikalpas* frequently arise from one, and one *vikalpa* arises from many. The offspring of *vikalpas* are extraordinary. Just as their growth is amazing, so is their destruction. A *vikalpa* is destroyed either by an opposite *vikalpa* or by fading away. In other words, one *vikalpa* can arise from another and undergo many modifications, or else that *vikalpa* can become *nirvikalpa*.

313. To understand *vikalpas* we can categorize them into four groups: those in an unmanifest state, those that are beginning to manifest, those that are at the point of fully manifesting and those that are fully manifest. *Vikalpas* in the last three stages give rise to pleasure and pain.

314. When even ordinary people spend time in the company of the great, they too become great. If they keep bad company, they are corrupted. Just as *vikalpas* can be affected by one's interactions in the outer world, similarly, in a subtle way and with even greater intensity, *vikalpas* can undergo change within.

315. The current of *vikalpas* is astonishing and flows incessantly. But sometimes in the midst of it, like a flash of lightning, there occurs an instant that is free of *vikalpas*. In that instant there is contact with Consciousness. This is the state of one's true nature.

316. While one is reading or running, or experiencing fear, happiness or surprise, or pronouncing particular vowel sounds called *visargas*, there may be a moment when everything is suspended, when one can neither understand nor say anything. At this moment one experiences a state without thought-waves. The *upāyas* were created to stabilize this thought-free state.

It has already been stated that the different kinds of understanding of the principles from Shiva to the earth are *vikalpas*. For convenience and practicality we can describe these *vikalpas* in three ways. The first group of *vikalpas* enables us to carry on our mundane life in the world. The second group helps us to attain our true nature by enabling us to understand the principles of *para* (*abheda*, the supreme non-duality), *parāpara* (*bhedābheda*, unity in diversity) and *apara* (*bheda*, duality). The third group is used to remove one by one the progeny of the other *vikalpas* and to attain the thought-free state.

Although there is no *vikalpa* that is different from Shiva, the *vikalpas* arise through ignorance. We should root out all the *vikalpas* that lead us to believe that worldly objects are different from one another. We pursue the *nirvikalpa* state to attain our true nature, which is self-luminous and untainted by ignorance. The *vikalpas* that we use to eradicate the *vikalpas* of duality destroy these *vikalpas* and disappear. Then only the *saṃvit* state, the state of pure Consciousness, remains. This is the state of the blissful Self. We can neither

remove anything from Consciousness nor add anything to it. Our goal is to experience Consciousness.

Of course, all the efforts that are made to escape the tumult of the *vikalpas* are also *vikalpas*. But they are *vikalpas* of *śuddhavidyā*, or pure knowledge. The *vikalpas* that cause suffering pertain to *aśuddhavidyā*, or impure knowledge. A person who is infatuated with impure *vikalpas* – ignorance of his own true nature, a negative attitude towards the Self, lack of faith in God, striving to acquire material objects, indifference towards turning within – repents his whole life long. To acquire pure *vikalpas* and make then constantly arise within us, we should receive the Sadguru's instructions, practise *sādhanā*, keep good company, and engage in uplifting conversation. Even through such conversation a seeker can decide, according to his understanding, how to expand to his true nature. If a person follows some practice such as continually contemplating a flame, he can have a direct realization of the Truth. Through the power of that realization there arises in him the awareness "I am transcendent as well as immanent. *Pūrno 'ham* – I am perfect."

One who merely reads a book about the *pūrno 'ham* awareness can only gossip about it. He cannot become *pūrno 'ham*. How can dry knowledge make one juicy? In the world there are many book-*jñānis*.[51]

There is a saying: "A scholar is like a torch." A torch has an oily rag tied to one end. This rag is set on fire and a person carries it at night to illumine his path. Although the torch gives light to all, the area beneath the flame remains in darkness. In the same way, a scholar gives one lecture after another but fails to understand their essence himself. For that reason, the Guru's

51. *Jñāni*: a knower of the Truth.

guidance, good company, the practice of *sādhanā*, and discussion of the Truth are absolutely necessary. By these means a seeker easily attains his own true nature, the all-pervasive and perfect I-consciousness, and merges with the Truth. Perfection merges with perfection.

317. In the state of bondage the mind is the basis of all *vikalpas*. In the *Yogasūtras*, Patanjali says, योगश्चित्तवृत्ति-निरोधः।[52] – "*Yoga* is the inhibition of the modifications of the mind." It is everyone's experience that the journey of life is made through the *vikalpas* arising in the mind. Through withdrawal of the senses, concentration, meditation and other spiritual practices, the *vikalpas* should be roasted. If *vikalpas* arise even after one is pursuing one's own true nature, their strength should be reduced.

Two main points are discussed in the *śāktopāya*: how to use the *vikalpas* in a positive way in order to become free of them and how to become established in the *nirvikalpa* state. The practices that we use to make the *vikalpas* positive belong to the realm of duality, but the practices that we use to become established in the *nirvikalpa* state lead to the vision of unity. These practices are also known as *jñānopāya*. A great being who has attained realization through this *upāya* experiences the bliss of God and the nectar of the totality of Consciousness. He experiences them at all times, while awake, asleep, at work, at home, in the market and in the factory.

यत्र यत्र मनस्तुष्टिर्मनस्तत्रैव धारयेत्।
तत्र तत्र परानन्दस्वरूपं सम्प्रवर्तते॥

52. *Pātañjaliyogasūtras*, 1.2.

> Wherever a person's mind finds satisfaction, let it concentrate on that. In every such case, the true nature of the highest bliss will manifest.[53]

The satisfaction of the mind lies in joy, not in agitation. If a *yogī* does not control his mind, it becomes agitated by the various *vikalpas* and makes him fall from his yogic state. Only by quieting the agitation of desire, anger and so on, can the *yogī* still his mind. Therefore he should practise making the mind still in whichever object of beauty delights it or wherever it revels through the five senses of perception and five powers of action. A *yogī* should become aware, "I alone exist. I am of the form of Shiva, who is Consciousness and bliss. Everything is my own glory." In this way he absorbs desire and other sources of agitation into himself.

By making the intellect one-pointed and still, a *yogī* should feel, "My own nature pulsates everywhere." Even when the mind of an ordinary person focuses on any object, whether good or bad, he forgets everything else. A *yogī* should increase his mental one-pointedness and become centred in that state where he, too, forgets everything else. At that point he becomes established in his own true, blissful nature. Then his various fantasies become *nirvikalpa*, and everything is filled with Shiva. Although you are already Shiva, become Shiva. Then your heart will be filled with ecstasy.

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53. *Vijñānabhairava*, 74.

19

Advaitabhāva: The Attitude of Non-duality

318. A particular group of sages supporting the concept of duality asserts that although an individual performs actions, the fruits are granted according to the judgement of God. To support this view they quote the following statement from the *Upaniṣads*: कर्माध्यक्षः सर्वभूताधिवासः साक्षी चेता केवलो निर्गुणश्च।[54] "God, who presides over all actions, is the attributeless Witness." The philosophies of Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Yoga and so on, belong to this category.[55] These philosophies, which strengthen the notion of duality, have made God solely and totally transcendental. However, there is only one Supreme Principle and it pervades the entire universe. एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति।[56] – "Reality is one, but the wise men of different philosophies describe it in many different ways." Some call it Ram; others call it Krishna, Allah, Parameshwara or the Void. They call the same One by different names, but the Truth is the same for all.

54. *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad*, 6.11cd
55. Three of the six main philosophies in the Indian system.
56. *Rgveda*, 1.164.46

Once a saint told his disciples the following story: One day four people, a Persian, an Arab, a Turk and a Greek, went on a journey together. They had been given two rupees to spend. The Persian said, "I'll buy angur with this money, and we can all eat them." The Arab said, "No, I want to buy inab." The Turk said, "No, I like uzum. I want to buy that." The Greek said, "I don't want to buy anything but stafyllia." Each of them kept repeating what he wanted, without understanding the other three. Finally they began to quarrel. वादे वादे वैरवह्नि वर्धते – "The fire of enmity grows through arguments and counter-arguments." They began to exchange blows. At that point a wise man approached them and asked why they were fighting. After listening to them he said, "Don't fight. I'll satisfy all of you. I'll bring what each of you wants." He took the money, went to a shop, and bought grapes. Then he distributed them equally among the four. The Persian said, "These are my angur!" The Arab said, "Here are my inab!" The Turk said, "These are my uzum!" And the Greek said, "Here are my stafyllia!" The saint who related this story told his disciples that we all need such a wise man. Even today, people who lack the eye of knowledge fight because they have blind faith in one particular doctrine. However, there is only one Supreme Principle for all, one goal, one purpose, one love.

319. Another group of sages states that Paramashiva, through His independent power, has become the material universe, which is full of various forms, modifications and change. They state that He has also become the innumerable individual souls, who are nothing but Consciousness. The tradition of Advaita, or non-duality, accepts this theory.

320. *Advaita* means one without a second. There are many different schools of philosophy. The Madhyamikas are Shunyavadins; the Yogacharas are Vijnanavadins; the Vivartavadins are Nirvisheshadvaitins; the Shakti Vishishtadvaitins and Vishishtadvaitins are Savishesha Advaitins; the Yadava Prakashacharyas are Brahma Advaitins; the exponents of Kashmir Shaivism are Bhedabhedadvaitins.

The word *advaita* is common to all these philosophies. All the Advaitavadins consider the world, virtue and sin, bondage and liberation to be real in one way or another. They all share one main belief – the operation of the law of *karma*. They believe that the current of *karma* has been flowing in this world of reality since the beginning of time but that it finally ends in liberation. Among these schools of Advaita, the tradition of Kashmir Shaivism belongs to the group that says that the world is not different from the Absolute. Actually it teaches that the world is both different and not different from Him, because the world is the effect of the Shakti of that Supreme Principle.

In this philosophy, the nature of *karma* is described in a unique way. Paramashiva, together with His own inseparable Shakti who contains the five powers, has become both transcendental and immanent. In His transcendental state He is completely serene, without modification, movement or vibration. In His immanent state He is the *grāhakas*, individual souls; *grāhya*, the world; and *grahana*, the body and the senses. For many reasons, these three appear to be different and to have different natures. In the form of individual souls, Shiva performs good or bad actions and then experiences them as pain or pleasure. In Shaivism this is called the *kārmamala*.

321. The play of creation in which unity is paramount is called *śuddhādhvā*, or the pure creation. The creation in which duality is paramount and which is characterised by multiplicity is called *āśuddhādhvā*, or the impure creation. As the *jñāna*, *iccha* and *kriyā śaktis* become contracted one by one, they become the *āṇava*, *māyīya* and *kārma malas*. In the pure creation there are five *tattvas* and in the impure creation there are thirty-one *tattvas*. This makes a total of thirty-six *tattvas*. All thirty-one *tattvas* of the impure creation came into existence because of the *malas*. Without the *āṇavamala*, the *māyīyamala* does not appear. The individual, whose body and senses are composed of the thirty-one principles of the *māyīyamala*, has limited knowledge and power and, due to the *kārmamala*, performs good or bad actions.

Although *jñāna*, *iccha* and *kriyā śaktis* are closely connected to one another, *kriyāśakti* predominates in action. Actually these three things exist in all actions: to know, to desire and to strive. If we do not know something, we have no desire for it. If we have no desire for it, we do not perform the action of striving to obtain it. This shows that there is a close connection among these *śaktis*. From the highest viewpoint, these *śaktis* are not different from one another because they belong to the one Consciousness.

322. Many actions are performed by the physical body, the subtle senses, and the subtle body which interconnects them. These actions can either bring about one's downfall or, when they cause the expansion of knowledge, improve one's welfare. However, actions are not the true cause of the expansion of knowledge. They can only make one worthy of it.

The subject of how long one has to perform actions and when they cease is very profound. People give their own meaning to the word *karma*. According to Kashmir Shaivism, the true experience of the play of Consciousness consists of performing actions with the understanding that it is the *kriyāśakti* acting, not the individual. If a person performs actions with this understanding, they do not bind him. Knowledge, meditation, *mantra* repetition, and worship all help him to attain the Self. But if a person fails to understand the concept of non-doership and performs actions with ego and attachment, they bind him. This is the conviction of Shaivism.

323. One should perform actions considering them to be service to God. At the same time one should renounce their fruits, knowing that to perform actions with a sense of detachment is the natural state of *prakṛti*, or nature. Through the *āṇavamala*, Consciousness becomes contracted; through the *māyīyamala*, one becomes aware of differences; through the *kārmamala*, one performs good and bad actions. One who understands the mystery behind these things realizes that Shiva, through His play, is performing all the activities of the universe. With this understanding, a person pursues the miracle of seeing duality in unity and unity in duality. He finally attains the all-pervasive unity-awareness. He realizes *pūrno 'ham*, the perfect I-consciousness. As long as a person lacks the understanding of the universe and his own true nature, as long as he fails to experience the multiplicity of the universe as the play of the *śakticakra*, the group of powers, he is bound by *karma*. However, after the awakening of the knowledge of the Truth, a person's *karmas* help to expand his knowledge.

Everyone knows the actions performed by the body and experiences the feelings and thoughts of the mind. Enlightened beings fully experience the serene state, which is devoid of both bodily and mental activities, as their true nature. This serene Consciousness is the basis of all bodily and mental activities. One should experience this through contemplation. This is called the knowledge of one's own Self. A great being is one who has turned within and who knows his own Self. What is true knowledge? It is the knowledge of the Self.

324. The speciality of Shaivism is the complete attainment of the experience "I am Shiva." In the initial stages, a person with this cosmic awareness sees Paramashiva in everything. In the stage of mature awareness, he recognizes that he is one with Shiva. The scriptures describe the relationship between the world and the seeker in many ways. They also describe many spiritual practices that enable one to experience unity with Shiva. These are nothing more than different ways of relating to the world according to one's capacity. Although there is only one non-dual Principle to be understood in Shaivism, that Principle has become dual within unity. How did this happen? One's doubts can be removed by such books as the *Śivadṛṣṭi*, *Īśvara Pratyabhijñā* and *Spandakārikās*.

The *Śivasūtras* are the foundation of Kashmir Shaivism. They were discovered by the great Siddha Vasugupta. To disseminate the *Śivasūtras*, he wrote the *Spandakārikās* and other books in which he explained the hidden meanings of the *sūtras*.[57] Somananda wrote the *Śivadṛṣṭi*

57. There is some controversy regarding the authorship of *Spandakārikās*. Although Vasugupta is generally considered the author, some claim that it was written by his great disciple Kallata.

and proved through logical deduction (*yukti*) and reasoning (*pramāna*) that the world and Shiva are one. After him, Utpalacharya explained the meaning of this in a number of verses which together became known as the *Īśvara Pratyabhijñā*. His followers, Abhinavagupta and Kshemaraja, also substantiated the doctrine of Shaivism.

Through the *Śivadṛṣṭi*, *Īśvara Pratyabhijñā*, *Spanda-vivaraṇa* and other texts, we can obtain complete understanding and perceive, as directly as we perceive our own face in a mirror, that everything is Shiva, that our own true nature is the all-pervasive Shiva, and that the Self is Consciousness. Whether or not one reads these philosophies, Muktananda says that their essence is very simple. A pot that is made of clay is still fundamentally clay; ornaments made of gold remain gold inside and out; cotton cloth, which consists of warp and woof, is still cotton; tweezers, scissors and knives made of steel remain steel. A son has his father's form; a daughter has her mother's form. A mango comes from a mango, a coconut from a coconut. In the same way, Shiva is the original, material and instrumental cause of the entire universe.

The world is in Shiva, and Shiva is in the world. A coconut tree, with its extraordinary shape, springs from one coconut. Similarly the universe, which is wondrous and full of infinite forms, springs from Shiva and exists in Shiva. The universe is Shiva, the Supreme Consciousness. Shiva pervades all forms. He exists as conscious beings and as matter. Although He is many, He is one. He is a man and a woman. He is food. He is the experiencer as well as that that is experienced. He is *nityānanda*, eternal bliss, and *ātmānanda*, the bliss of

the Self. He is you and I. This is the Advaita doctrine of Shaivism.

इति वा यस्य संवित्तिः क्रीडात्वेनाखिलं जगत् ।[58]

The entire world is the play of Universal Consciousness. It has become the universe.

58. Vasugupta, *Spandakārikās*, 2.5.

20

Śivadṛṣṭi: The Outlook of Shiva

325. Everyone knows that there are two types of objects in the universe – sentient and insentient. The universe appears to be full of differences because it includes both matter and conscious beings. There are definite and important reasons for considering the universe to be Shiva, and it is essential to know what they are. As time passes, objections to this way of thinking will naturally arise; wherever there is a lack of understanding, objections always arise. Shri Somananda, refuting the objections that prevailed in his time, explained in one of his most sublime works, the *Śivadṛṣṭi*, how the universe is one with Shiva. He revealed that Shiva is everywhere. We should wear the glasses of that same *dṛṣṭi*, or outlook, and see things in that way.

326. No matter what we think, our experience is always limited by time, space and circumstances. Before we can understand that the universe is the embodiment of Shiva, we must first understand these three limitations; the *Śivadṛṣṭi* explains in detail why and how the supremely

independent Shiva, who is never bound by these three things, accepted such limitations. This subject will be dealt with in Chapters 22 and 23.

327. Paramashiva is the embodiment of Consciousness. He pulsates in all objects as Consciousness. Without being bound by anything, He expands through the *icchā* and *kriyā śaktis*.

आत्मैव सर्वभावेषु स्फुरन्निर्वृतचिद्विभुः।
अनिरुद्धेच्छाप्रसरः प्रसरद्दृक्क्रियः शिवः॥ [59]

Shiva Himself expands unobstructedly in all feelings through the *icchā* and *kriyā śaktis*. To regard all objects as the embodiment of Shiva is the *śivadṛṣṭi*, the outlook of Shiva.

328. Shiva is perfect, complete and omnipotent. He pervades equally all forms as well as formlessness. The universe is not different from Shiva. One who has this understanding sees Shiva's form everywhere. Therefore, Shankaracharya said, अहं ब्रह्मास्मि। – "I am the Absolute."

न शिवः शक्तिरहितो न शक्तिर्व्यतिरेकिणी॥
शिवः शक्तस्तथा भावानिच्छया कर्तुमीहते॥ [60]

Shiva and Shakti are not different from each other. Because Shiva possesses Shakti, He controls the activities of this multifaceted universe.

सचित्त्वं संस्थितं नित्यं कथनीयं तथाग्रतः॥
एवं सर्वपदार्थानां समैव शिवता स्थिता॥ [61]

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59. Somananda, *Śivadṛṣṭi*, 1.2.
60. Ibid., 3.2bc - 3ab.
61. Ibid., 1.47cd - 48ab.

Jñāna, *icchā* and *kriyā* exist in objects that have a form and also in formless feelings. Thus, Shivahood exists in all objects.

तस्मात्समग्राकारेषु सर्वासु प्रतिपत्तिषु।
विज्ञेयं शिवरूपत्वं स्वशक्त्यावेशनात्मकम् ॥[62]

Although Shiva, when moved by Shakti, exists in all perceptions, all forms and all objects, He is still perfect. He never loses His perfection.

एवं भेदात्मकं नित्यं शिवतत्त्वमनन्तकम्।
तथा तस्य व्यवस्थानान्नानारूपे ऽपि सत्यता ॥[63]

Although the universe is manifold because of the [constant re-arrangement of] infinite varieties of forms, in reality only the state of Shiva exists.

स्थितं शिवत्वं सर्वत्र विशेषाच्छैववादिनाम्।
एकत्वेन ततो ज्ञेया शिवता सर्वगोचरा ॥[64]

It has been proved that the state of Shiva is everywhere, in duality as well as in unity, because Shiva possesses infinite powers. A devotional person sees Shiva's form everywhere.

329. A seeker who is truly ripe does not need any *upāyas* to recognize that he is Shiva. Just as he can naturally recognize his parents, in the same way he can recognize that he is Shiva through inference, scriptural truths or a word from the Guru. He does not need to perform any spiritual practices. For him, the means of attainment (*upāya*) and the goal that is attained (*upeya*), the attainment (*prāpya*) and the one who attains (*prāpaka*), the enjoyer (*bhokta*) and that which is enjoyed (*bhogya*) are all forms of Shiva.

62. Somananda, *Śivadṛṣṭi*, 3.17.

63. Ibid., 1.49.

64. Ibid., 4.126cd - 127.

एकवारं प्रमाणेन शास्त्राद्वा गुरुवाक्यतः॥
ज्ञाते शिवत्वे सर्वस्थे प्रतिपत्त्या दृढात्मना॥[65]

One who has firm conviction easily attains the experience of perfection in his own state by knowing Shiva. This comes through scriptural inference or just one word from the Guru.

शिवो ऽस्मि साधनाविष्टः शिवो ऽहं याजको ऽप्यहम्।
शिवं यामि शिवो यामि शिवेन शिवसाधनः॥[66]

Practise *sādhanā* with the following awareness: "I am a form of Shiva. I will attain Shiva. By becoming Him, I will attain Him. Because I am Shiva, I will attain Shivahood very easily." This is the *sādhanā* to attain Shiva.

भिन्नो ऽप्यभिन्न एवास्मि शिव इत्थं विचेष्टनम्।
शिवो भोक्ता शिवो भोज्यं शिवेषु शिवसाधनः॥[67]

Although I appear to be different, I am one with Shiva. The entire universe is the activity of Shiva. Shiva experiences everything. It is essential to know Shiva. Being Shiva, I will attain Him. Shiva is the experiencer as well as what is experienced. While remaining Shiva, I will attain Him.

शिवः कर्ता शिवः कर्म शिवो ऽस्मि करणात्मकः॥[68]

Shiva is the doer of everything. He is also the action. Although I am involved with all my senses, I am still Shiva.

In this way, by becoming established in the awareness of Shiva, by knowing Shiva, a mature seeker

65. Somananda, *Śivadṛṣṭi*, 7. 5cd - 6ab.
66. Ibid., 7. 96cd, 97cd, 98cd.
67. Ibid., 7.99.
68. Ibid., 7.100cd.

becomes one with Him. This is the essence of the *Śivadṛṣṭi*. In the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* it is said, या दृष्टिः सा सृष्टिः। – "The world is as you see it."

330. The blissful Paramashiva both transcends the universe and is the universe. He is the highest bliss and nothing but a mass of light. He makes the entire universe from Shiva to the earth come into existence, yet always remains one with Himself. Actually, in that state there is no other subject or object. The supreme, blissful Shiva alone manifests Himself in the innumerable forms of multiplicity.

331. The creation experienced by one ignorant person differs from that of another. A person's creation depends on his understanding. However, for one who knows the truth, the entire world is the embodiment of Shiva.

अहं शिवः शिवश्चायं त्वं चापि शिव एव हि।
सर्वं शिवमयं ब्रह्म शिवात्परं न किञ्चन॥

I am Shiva and Shiva is me. You are also Shiva. Everything is Shiva. Everything is Brahman. Everything is Consciousness. There is nothing different from Shiva.

नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन – "There is no multiplicity here whatsoever." There is nothing that is different from Shiva. This is *śivadṛṣṭi*, the outlook of Shiva. This is the outlook of the Self. This is the outlook of spirituality. Any outlook other than this is blindness.

21

Pravṛttivāda: The Theory of Extroversion

332. The contraction of Shakti is the fundamental cause of the state of individuality. In this contracted state, a person always focuses outside himself. He is always extroverted and so limitless desires torture him in every possible way. If he is alone he wants to become two — he wants a mate. If he is married he wants a house. Then he wants to have children or to expand his business. Desire can never know contentment. Just as darkness cannot comprehend the sun, a desire can never experience satisfaction or fulfilment. In the kingdom of desires, satisfaction and contentment have never taken birth.

Desires are always increasing. The more we encourage them, the more they flourish. They can never be satisfied. Even if our desires obtained all three worlds, they would still keep growing. No matter how many means we use to placate them, they continue to swell. If we satisfy the body, our mental desires multiply. There is no way to fulfil desires through limited objects. Anxiety, fear, doubts and the innumerable offspring of jealousy continue to proliferate in the wake of desire.

The progeny of extroversion overrun the world. Only when extroversion merges into the infinite Supreme Principle are all its desires fulfilled; only then do they cease to exist. The attainment of this state of universality is called *mokṣa*, or liberation.

Even after dwelling on limited things for a long time, one does not attain peace. This is why the belief has arisen that it is better to reject them. Believing this with great intensity, some scholars renounce mundane activities and the outer world. They explain that the world should be renounced because it is imaginary, illusory and full of momentary pain and pleasure. The truth is that no matter what lectures a person may give, no matter what books or dramas he may write from birth to death, he cannot become free of these imaginary but naturally created limitations and the pain and pleasure that arise from them.

333. A person can lead a joyful life in the world and experience universal brotherhood if he has the inner knowledge that the external world is the embodiment of God. He should also have the firm conviction that the people of the world are all God, and perform virtuous actions with peace, with good feelings, and without deception or expectations. If he leads his life in the world without expectations, he will attain happiness and contentment.

22

The Cause of Bondage

334. As long as the individual soul is affected by *māyāśakti*[69] and considers the universe to be different from himself, he will remain bound. In reality this world, which is the play of Shakti, is his own body. Considering the world to be other than himself is the cause of his bondage. Attachment and aversion, enmity and jealousy and other kinds of misery arise from the idea that the knower and the known are separate. The individual soul performs good or bad actions through the influence of these sources of misery. Impressions of old desires and the fruits of actions ultimately ripen and give birth to infinite impurities. If a person recognizes his own true nature through the power of pure knowledge, he becomes free. Through pure knowledge, bondage dissolves.

> एषः प्रमाता मायान्धः संसारी कर्मबन्धनः।
> विद्याभिज्ञापितैश्वर्यः चिद्घनो मुक्त उच्यते ॥[70]
>
> The individual soul, through the power of *māyā*, falls into the bondage of *karma* and is subject to the law of transmigration. Through true knowledge, he is made to recognize his power and then, because he is pure Consciousness, he is called liberated.

69. The power that creates differentiation.
70. Utpalacharya, *Īśvara Pratyabhijñā*, 3.2.2.

23

Release from Bondage

335. Three impurities, or *malas* — *āṇavamala*, *māyīyamala*, and *kārmamala* – exist in everyone, from gods to human beings. अपूर्णोऽहं मन्यतारूपमाणवमलम् । – "*āṇavamala* is the notion 'I am imperfect.'" Although the individual soul is perfect, he considers himself imperfect. This is *āṇavamala*, which comes into being because of the contraction of *icchāśakti*, the power of will. *Āṇavamala* causes the omnipresent Paramashiva to lose His all-pervasiveness and become a limited individual. अनात्मन्यात्माभिमानम् । – "To identify oneself with the non-Self, the body and so on, is *āṇavamala*."

Māyīyamala also comes into existence because of a contraction of *icchāśakti*, भिन्नवेद्यप्रथा । – "It brings about a sense of difference." Even though Chiti is non-dual and all-pervasive, through *māyīyamala* it experiences duality. The body is enveloped by the *pañca kañcukas*, or five limitations of Shakti, and is under the control of the senses. This is the effect of *māyīyamala*.

Kārmamala is the cause of शुभाशुभानुष्ठानम् । – good and bad actions – performed through the senses of perception, the powers of action and the mind. Birth is

caused by actions. From good actions one reaps good fruit. From bad actions one reaps bad fruit. *Kārmamala* follows an individual through countless births in the form of impressions and tendencies.

A limited individual's experience consists of the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. His world is made of these states and the *malas*. While the individual is in bondage, he identifies with the void of the deep-sleep state, the *prāṇa*, the subtle body and the physical body. Through the Guru, the knowledge of the scriptures, his own efforts and the understanding that he is independent, all-pervasive, eternal and perfect, he transcends all his ordinary experiences and feelings. The different *upāyas*, chanting hymns to God, offering salutations, repeating the *mantra oṃ namaḥ śivāya*, worship, meditation, the practices leading to *samādhi*, and other spiritual activities are all taught in order to facilitate this transformation. With the help of these things, a person's knowledge expands and he experiences the bliss of Consciousness. As long as his body is alive, he lives happily. Once his body dies, he becomes one with Paramashiva.

24

Saṃvit Parāmarśa: The Comprehension of the Supreme I-Consciousness

336. On one hand our experience leads us to believe that matter and consciousness are inseparable. On the other hand we experience matter as inert objects, different from consciousness. We know that ultimately the experience of matter as separate – as *idam*, "this" – evolves into *saṃvit parāmarśa*, the experience of the supreme I-consciousness. For this reason, we think that only conscious entities have the power of consciousness and that inert objects lack it. Both of these experiences are the play of God, who assumes the form of the universe.

स्वात्मैव सर्वजन्तूनाम् एक एव महेश्वरः।
विश्वरूपो ऽहमिदमित्यखण्डामर्शबृंहितः।

Only the Self, God, who has taken the form of the universe, exists in all beings. By ceaselessly contemplating "I am He", a person blissfully experiences the entire universe as his own Self.

Through its independent power, the infinite I-consciousness plays in the form of both "I" and "this". In the experience of perfect I-consciousness there is no distinction of place or time. If this differentiation arises, Consciousness takes the form of the world of objects. This is where the difference arises between the two experiences mentioned above. By contracting His power, God creates the world, or *idam*. He assumes many forms: the intellect, *prāṇa*, the physical body and so on. Limited by duality, the partial I-consciousness experiences "I am different". In this way, because we lack the knowledge of our own true nature we have become rooted in duality, in the idea that we are many. Therefore such concepts as "I am the experiencer", "This is joyful" and "That is painful" have multiplied.

स्वस्वरूपपरिज्ञानमयो ऽनेकः पुमान् मतः।
तत्र सृष्टौ क्रियानन्दो भोगो दुःखसुखात्मकः॥

A person creates pain and pleasure and becomes troubled by forgetting his own Self and getting caught up in the knowledge of duality, by limiting his own perfection and accepting imperfection, and by creating duality with the understanding "I am different from others".

337. When a person acquires the knowledge of his own true nature, the pure I-awareness, his old world changes into a new one filled with joy, bliss, love and God. The entire world is the play of the Universal Consciousness.

25

Śivasamāveśa: Union with Shiva

338. In God, the *jñāna*, *icchā* and *kriyā śaktis* remain pure. In a bound soul they are impure because of *māyā*. In this state, in which one considers the separate objects of the world to be devoid of awareness, there arise the three *guṇas* – *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (activity), and *tamas* (inertia). *Sattva* is characterized by pleasure (*prakāśa*), and its function is knowledge. *Rajas* is characterized by pain (*aprakāśa*), and its function is action (*kriyā*). *Tamas* is characterized by the deluded state in which one experiences neither pleasure nor pain (*avaprakāśa*), and its function is restriction (*niyamana*). The soul, therefore, experiences joy through purity, pain through activity, and illusion or wrong understanding through inertia. Through the influence of the *guṇas*, different kinds of understanding arise within. They are all reflections of the power of the Supreme Consciousness. The mental creation of the bound soul is of two types: one is imagination of what is actual, such as visualizing the warp and woof of cloth, and the other is deluded imagination, such as believing a

rope to be a snake. Both are creations of the mind. When these thoughts disappear through the awareness of *śivo 'ham* – "I am Shiva" – a person acquires the certainty that the entire universe is one with God. As this knowledge becomes firmly rooted in him, he becomes a *jivanmukta* (a being who is liberated while still in the body) even though isolated thoughts continue to arise within him.

> सर्वो ममायं विभव इत्येवं परिजानतः।
> विश्वात्मनो विकल्पानां प्रसरे ऽपि महेशता ॥[71]
>
> He who has realized his identity with the universe and who knows that all that is manifest is simply his glory, possesses the status of the highest Lord, even when thoughts and images are still arising in him.

Such a liberated soul becomes established in the awareness of Shiva and considers all the thoughts that arise and subside in the space of Consciousness to be like clouds coming and going in the sky.

339. This is the difference between a bound soul and an enlightened being. A *yogī* who has attained true knowledge considers all the principles from Shiva through Sadashiva down to insects as one. To him everything is *aham*, or "I". समता सर्वभूतानां समता सर्ववल्लीनाम्। – "He sees equality in all beings, trees and creepers." For him, the entire world is *prameya*, that which is known, and he remains one with it. He also considers himself one with the knowers, *pramātṛs*. However, the understanding of a bound soul is different from this. A bound soul considers the knower to be different from that that is known.

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71. Abhinavagupta, *Īśvara Pratyabhijñā Vimarśinī*, 4.1.12.

Joy and pain, enmity and friendship, bondage and liberation, and supreme bliss all arise within and are simply a matter of understanding. Maintaining the right understanding is one's *sādhanā* as well as its fruit. An individual who considers himself to be God, and who considers his powers of knowledge and action to be manifestations of God's independent freedom, experiences God's cosmic form. Such a seeker merges into God and becomes Him when his body dies.

The *Bhagavadgītā* says, बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च।[72] – "He dwells equally in all sentient beings and insentient objects." Although fire appears in different forms, its heat is the same in all of them. In the same way, God pervades all objects and beings subtly and eternally. He is one, within and without, near and far, everywhere. His nature never changes. He is Shiva.

72. *Bhagavadgītā*, 13.15.

26

Jñānasvarūpa: The True Nature of Knowledge

340. It is natural for the question to arise, "When we see an object, where do we get our understanding of that object?" Knowledge does not come only from external objects. In fact, some people know nothing about a particular object even though they come in contact with it. Others may be indifferent to that object. There are also people on whom an object makes no impression even though they make an effort to perceive it. Therefore we cannot say that external objects necessarily give rise to knowledge. Of course, external objects are necessary to create either joy or agitation through our outer senses. But the knowledge that we derive from such words as heaven, hell, Kailasa and Vaikuntha does not depend on the physical existence of these places. Such knowledge springs from a definite centre in the realm of our feelings. It does not need the same kind of basis as the knowledge that arises from contact with external objects.

For example, our lives are primarily focused on the belief in virtue and sin. This tendency, which makes

us think that bad actions are wrong and good actions are right, does not need any outer support. The tendency can be understood by its own reality, which is also its motivating force. For a person who has faith and understands the state of Shiva, that understanding is not different from its impulse, which is *kriyāśakti*. In other words, all these kinds of understanding are not different from the Supreme Principle.

341. *Yogīs* do not view their understanding as different from the Supreme Principle, their true inner nature. The inner Principle with its own vibration arises as one's limited understanding. This understanding gives an object definite characteristics – for example, "This is a mango; it is red, round, and weighs two kilos." Even though the experience of these characteristics is limited, still it is the result of the vibration of Consciousness as *jñānaśakti*, the power of knowledge.

Since *jñānaśakti* is a vibration of Consciousness, the result of its play is also not different from Consciousness. In other words, when the vibration becomes limited, objects are perceived with limited vision. This understanding is called *grāhya grāhaka bhāva* – awareness of the subject-object relationship. When a person says, "I see this object", that "I" is the *grāhaka bhāva* – the awareness of the perceived. The awareness of both the perceiver and the perceived vibrates in the *pramātṛ*, or knower. These differences, however, are all vibrations of the Truth. "This is a mountain", "This is a piece of fruit", "This is a man" – all of these constant vibrations of the perceived actually are not different from the perceiver.

In reality, everything is the vibration of the Supreme Principle. The perceiver and the perceived are both

forms of the same Principle. If a person gives up his ego through right understanding, he naturally uplifts himself and becomes the true Absolute. Otherwise, like a silkworm enclosed in a cocoon, he becomes trapped in the beauty of his own body and forgets himself. Then he becomes his own enemy.

342. Therefore a person should seek his own Self and understand the world. He should know God who permeates the forms of the world. When he understands and knows his own Self, all his old impressions subside. He never again feels, "I am different from God and God is far away from me." When filth and squalour are removed only purity is left. Similarly, when the war of thoughts and doubts comes to an end, the individual becomes God. When a person's identification with the body is totally destroyed, he need do nothing else to become God because he has been completely saturated with God all along. His experience is "I am in God and God is in me." Moreover, he experiences the entire universe as being filled with God. This kind of understanding is *jñānasvarūpa*, the true nature of knowledge.

27

Pratibhā: The Light of Consciousness

343. The power through which we understand what a particular object is or through which we obtain any kind of knowledge is called *pratibhā*. For example, we know that a certain object is a pen. The power through which we realize that it is a pen is called *pratibhā*. The power of *pratibhā* is one with *pramātṛ*, the knower. We usually obtain knowledge of different objects singly and sequentially, one after another. When we are discussing one subject, other subjects do not come up; when we are reflecting on one object, we do not think of other objects. But when we look at a picture with a forest, an ocean, a tree and a creeper painted in different colours, we do not get a clear-cut impression of each separate object – instead, we receive collective knowledge of the whole mass. Later, as we notice each separate object, we forget our previous collective knowledge of it. In this way, the consciousness of the whole exists before the understanding that comes in sequence. That non-dual and non-sequential consciousness, *pratibhā*, is the Knower: God.

या चैषा प्रतिभा तत्तत्पदार्थक्रमरूषिता।
अक्रमानन्तचिद्रूपः प्रमाता स महेश्वरः। [73]

That consciousness that is coloured by or identified with the succession of different objects is nothing other than the great Lord, the highest Knower, and nothing but the unchanging light of Consciousness.

344. *Pratibhā* is the force behind inner inspiration. It is a wondrous light and an extraordinary experience. It is God's power, the light of the Self. It exists in God eternally. The moment this Shakti unfolds, the entire world expands.

345. One can attain *pratibhā* by destroying thoughts and past impressions and through *śaktipāta*, or the grace of Shiva. A being who has attained *pratibhā* eliminates all thoughts and experiences and so can remove the obstacles that prevent him from seeing his own true nature. He can directly know the past, present and future; he can have a vision of the incredible Parameshwari, the Supreme Shakti; he can fashion a new creation within himself because *pratibhā* gives rise to ever-new creative abilities.

The One who controls the activities of the mundane world with its different varieties of knowledge is called the Knower. This Knower determines cause and effect by combining the past, which we have already seen, with the present, which we see now, and so on. Thus we acquire our knowledge of what exists and what does not exist, of obstructions and that that is being obstructed. New thoughts and feelings continually arise along with the power to discriminate between an object

73. Utpalacharya, *Īśvara Pratyabhijñā*, 1.7.7.

and its *dharma*, or inherent nature. In this way, in the principle of *pratibhā*, both pure and impure activities occur. This principle is composed of various kinds of understanding that are mutually opposed.

346. The understandings that arise in us are momentary. They are all relative and merely *ābhāsas*, or reflections. Although we have different thoughts, which consist of variations of the past, present, and future, only one Being is the substratum of them all. We can divide our experiences into four categories: joyful, painful, those which cause joy, and those which cause pain. We think that wealth brings joy and that violence, poverty and so on, bring pain. When we come in contact with objects, pain and pleasure arise. We experience joy when we obtain the objects that we desire; as long as we do not have them we are not happy. In addition, we have the mistaken idea that all the efforts we put forth to attain happiness are also joyful. Once we have enjoyed the desired object, all that remains is the reflection of thoughts, the memory; through delusion, we also consider that to be joy.

Actually, happiness is the reflection of the vibration of *jñānaśakti*, the power of knowledge. It is not tied to objects. Although a renunciant and a greedy person have the same right to wealth, the renunciant, because he understands these *ābhāsas*, values renunciation, whereas the greedy person gives more importance to indulging in pleasure. The more we think about pain or pleasure, the more we conclude that they are merely *ābhāsas*.

सुखादिषु च हेतुष्वपिसौख्यादि च वस्तुषु।
अवभासाय सद्भावे ऽप्यतीतत्वात्तथ स्थितिः।[74]

74. Ibid., 1.8.3.

> Although *ābhāsas* such as pleasure, or those that are the means thereof, remain always the same, they manifest differently because they are unified with another *ābhāsa*, namely "past".

347. There are differences among external objects. Moreover, these objects arise, come and go. At one moment they exist and then they do not. Therefore they do not have absolute existence. Because the inner Principle is of the nature of absolute existence, there are differences only in its vibrations, not in that Principle itself. The reflections of Consciousness manifest outwardly as thoughts. The will-power, or *icchāśakti* of the inner Knower brings about the experiences of pain and pleasure that arise from external objects. In this way, as the Shakti of the Knower flows outward, inner and outer activities go on through the powers of knowledge and action. All understanding, both inner and outer, is considered to be due to the power of *pratibhā* awareness. Good company, discussion of the Truth, the gift of *śaktipāta* and God's grace are paramount in bringing about the direct knowledge of *pratibhā*.

28

Avabhāsa and Ābhāsadṛṣṭi: Seeing the World as a Reflection

348. The knowledge of the objects that can be perceived at any moment is first found within the knower. These objects are then seen outside. For this reason, they are called *ābhāsas* (or *avabhāsas*), reflections. The main characteristic of these reflections is *asāṅkarya*, which denotes the fact that they do not merge together and refers to inner understandings and outer objects that are mutually opposed to or different from one another. These are like fire and camphor that are reflected in the same mirror but do not interact. (The opposite of this is *sāṅkarya*, a blend; two things have to mix in order to become *sāṅkarya*.) In this way, the objects that we experience appear to be different from one another. However, the reflection and the reflected object are one and the same. Even though the manifested objects may remain separate from one another, they are not different from the reflecting subject. So, essentially, all the objects of experience are one. The knowledge of objects that arises in us is neither a product of our imagination nor an experience of past impressions.

349. The experiencing subject in the form of pure Consciousness unceasingly manifests the universe of infinite forms that exists within it even though there is no tangible material for such a manifestation. This is the play of its *icchāśakti*, or will-power. There are testimonies and stories of how *yogīs* and Siddhas who had achieved oneness with Consciousness created entire universes merely through their will-power. In the same way, only objects that exist within can be reflected outside.

> वर्तमानावभासानां भावानामवभासनम् ।
> अन्तः स्थितावतामेव घटते बहिरात्मना ॥ [75]
>
> The inner Self continually manifests outwardly the objects that exist in its inner consciousness through its thought.

350. *Vimarśa* is the subject's act of examination of its own inner thoughts or feelings.

> विमर्शो हि सर्वं सह परमप्यात्मीकरोति
> आत्मानं च परीकरोत्युभयमेकीकरोति
> एकीकृतं द्वयमपि न्यग्भावयतीत्येवं स्वभावः ॥
>
> *Vimarśa* is everything. It makes itself others and makes others itself. It can make one into two, make two into one, or make everything disappear. That is its nature.

Vimarśa is the action of Chiti. It marks the difference between insentient objects and conscious beings. An inert rock does not examine itself and say, "I am." This means that it lacks knowledge of Consciousness; it is insentient because it cannot attain the awareness "I

75. Abhinavagupta, *Īśvara Pratyabhijñā Vimarśinī*.

am unlimited Consciousness." Experiencing subjects, as opposed to insentient objects, are aware of their existence as "I" and have the potential of knowing themselves as Consciousness. Ordinarily they experience insentient objects as *idam*, "this". The play of this *vimarśaśakti* is infinite. *Vimarśaśakti*, by manifesting differences between subject and object, creates desire.

In this state of inner examination, whatever we have accumulated within has not yet manifested as letters and words but remains in undifferentiated seed form. These seeds are the cause of the various activities created by letters. These letters are symbolic expressions of *māyā*. Freedom is the essential nature of the source from which these letters arise. It does not depend on anything. This is discussed at length in the Shaivite literature.

351. When I say "I see this object", it is a manifestation of *jñānaśakti*, or the power of knowledge. This manifestation is called *spanda*. *Spanda* is the throb or movement of God. When there is even the slightest movement of Consciousness, the knowledge of manifold objects arises.

352. *Vimarśaśakti* manifests externally in the form of *māyāśakti*, the power of illusion. At that time, it makes us aware of duality, and we experience differences through such words as knowledge, determination and perseverance. When we analyse our understanding in a subtle way, two things become clear: first, the understanding that is connected with name and form, and secondly, the understanding of pure being, which transcends the limitations of name and form. This pure

being is called *sat*. The word *sat* cannot be ascribed a definite meaning. Generally, when we say *sat* we mean "that which exists forever." It exists as an eternal principle, even in all objects; however, it is very difficult to prove this because something that has no name or form cannot be grasped through empirical knowledge.

The truth is that the principle of *sat* exists even in empirical knowledge. It can also be perceived in objects. The ancient seers said that objects have the following five aspects: *asti*, existence; *bhāti*, the act of shining; *priya*, joy; *nāma*, name; and *rūpa*, form. *Priya*, *nāma*, and *rūpa* belong to the category of that which is experienced; *asti* and *bhāti* are associated with the Supreme Principle. Although the Reality that is known as pure existence cannot be limited by time and space, it is still one with them. That Principle of pure existence in itself does not appear with name and form as *idam*, "this". In its immanent aspect, it appears as *idam* through the powers of knowledge, memory and reasoning, but still, in its transcendental aspect it is different from them.

> घटो ऽयमित्यध्यवसानां रूपातिरेकिणी।
> परेशशक्तिरात्मेव भासते न त्विदन्तया॥[76]
>
> The Shakti of Shiva shines as the Self by transcending such perceptions of name and form as "This is a pot."

From this, we conclude that all the innumerable *abhāsas* are merely the play of that Chitshakti, or Consciousness.

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76. Utpalacharya, *Īśvara Pratyabhijñā*

29

Spandanirṇaya: The Discussion of Spanda

353. The *Śivasūtras* are the basic treatise of Kashmir Shaivism. The Siddha Vasugupta wrote commentaries on these *sūtras* and brought about a revival of interest in Kashmir Shaivism. His book, *Spandakārikās*, contains fifty-one verses explaining the main principles concealed in the *Śivasūtras*. In this way he disseminated them. The principles explained in these verses of the *Spandakārikās* are based on the experience of Siddhas and on the *Āgamaśāstras*, divinely revealed texts. The *Spandakārikās* is divided into three chapters: *Svarūpaspanda*, *Sahajavidyodayaspanda*, and *Vibhūtispanda*. The *Svarūpaspanda* explains the nature of the Supreme Principle and describes how limitations have concealed our true nature. The *Sahajavidyodayaspanda* explains how to discriminate between that that is external and that that is not, how to remain awake to the Self at all times, and also how to attain the knowledge of one's own Self. The *Vibhūtispanda* describes the glory of Shiva and the true awareness of Him.

30

Spandasvarūpa: The Nature of Spanda

354. स्पन्दते मम चक्षुः। – "My eyelids are fluttering." घटात्तैलं स्पन्दते। – "Oil is glistening in a pot." The word *spanda* is commonly used in these ways. The following words are synonyms for *spanda*, or movement: *sphota*, explosion; *sphurana*, throb; *calana*, motion; *kampana*, trembling; *udaya*, arising; *unmeśa*, expansion; *ābhāsana*, reflection; *nisyanda*, flux; and *unmīlana*, unfolding. *Spandaśakti* is the true nature of Paramashiva. This pure Supreme Principle reflects the totality of the thirty-six *tattvas*. This Principle is the deity that is the basis of all knowledge; it is the vital force of all *mantras*; it is the glory of Consciousness, which has manifested in the form of Chitshakti and which has enveloped the entire universe.

355. The ordinary meaning of *spanda* is throb or vibration. In the terminology of Shaivism, the word *spanda* has a specific meaning. It refers to movement in something that was formerly motionless. *Spanda* is Shakti,

the power that transcends the senses. It is the Shakti that manifests from Shiva. The word *spanda* means subtle movement or the manifestation of the subtle and pure I-consciousness. We should not consider the *spanda* of the pure I-consciousness to be like the elements violently lashing the trees during a storm. We should understand the nature of *spanda* as the mere readiness of the Supreme Lord, who is the totality of Consciousness, to manifest as the outer universe by His own will using His independent Shakti. The nature of His *spanda* is nothing but pure I-consciousness. The perfect Shiva manifests this universe through His *spandaśakti*. In its very essence, *spandaśakti* is constant vibration. स्वात्मन्युच्छलनात्मकः। – "*Spanda* is the leaping up of the Lord's own Shakti." With the same *spanda* He also dissolves the universe.

स्वशक्तिप्रचयो ऽस्य विश्वम्। – "The universe is the unfolding of Shiva's power." *Spanda* is the first throb that takes place when Shakti expands. *Spandaśakti* exists in Shiva in an irregular or spontaneous form and reveals outwardly all the manifestations of the universe. The great beings define it as the five actions of Shiva: creation, sustenance, dissolution, concealment and bestowal of grace.

356. Ordinary *spanda* is nothing but the predominant active aspect of *vimarśaśakti*, the dynamic creative power that co-exists with *prakāśa*, the static aspect of Paramashiva. A period of rest occurs in *spanda* when the inner I-consciousness is in an undifferentiated form. It also occurs when the universe has manifested outwardly and when the universe is contemplated inwardly as *idam*. Only the universal *spandaśakti* has this freedom and infinite power.

यस्योन्मेषनिमेषाभ्यां जगतः प्रलयोदयौ।
तं शक्तिचक्रविभवप्रभवं शङ्करं स्तुमः॥[77]

We offer our salutations to that Shiva who is the fountainhead of all glory manifest in the *śakticakra*, and at whose waking and sleeping the world is created and dissolved.

77. Vasugupta, *Spandakārikās*, 1.10.

31

Spandalakṣana: The Definition of Spanda

357. A person cannot do his work merely because he wants to do it. The instruments of the senses cannot function simply by his willing them to do so. To do his work in the way that he wants, he needs the help of the senses, but there is another force that motivates the senses and gives them the power to work. This conscious force in its introverted aspect is called the *spanda* principle. It is also called *ātmabalasparśa* – the inspiration coming from contact with the strength of the Self. Through this contact with the Supreme Principle, the senses obtain the ability to carry out their work. It is this contact with the Supreme Power that is termed *spandaśakti* in our mundane experience.

Spandaśakti is also the grace-bestowing power in Gurus who give *śaktipāta*. Because the touch predominates in this *śakti*, we can understand the glory of Shakti through the touch and will of such Gurus.

358. The essential nature of the *spandaśakti* is the perfect, pure I-consciousness in the form of an initial flash or throb. Through this throb the same Shakti manifests in infinite forms.

शिवस्यैका महाशक्तिः शिवश्चैको ह्यनादिमान्
सा शक्तिर्भिद्यते देवि भेदैरानन्त्यं शाम्भवि।[78]

In Shiva, She manifests in infinite shapes and appears as the innumerable and unique forms of the universe.

As She vibrates eternally, She is called *spandaśakti*. That Shakti is not different from Shiva.

न शिवः शक्तिरहितो न शक्तिः शिववर्जिता।
उभयोरस्ति तादात्म्यं वह्निदाहकयोरिव॥

That *spandaśakti* is not different from Shiva, because Shiva is not different from Shakti. Both Shiva and Shakti refer to the same Reality, just as fire and heat are not two different things.

In other words, *spandaśakti* is the Sublime Reality.

सा स्फुरत्ता महासत्ता।

This vibrating Shakti is the Supreme Reality.

सत्ता च भावनाकारित्वात्सर्वक्रियासु स्वातन्त्र्यम्।

Because it is the Supreme Reality, it has the freedom to perform any action.

It gives birth to every visible object that exists in the world. In addition, through the imagination it even brings into being objects that do not exist at all from the standpoint of direct perception: सा च खपुष्पादिकमपि व्याप्नोति। – "for example, a flower in the sky." A flower in the sky, the son of a barren woman, and horns on a hare are all figments of the imagination. In addition to these, *spandaśakti* also gives birth to limitations of time, space and form. But because it is all-pervasive, it itself is not limited. देशकालविशेषिनी।– "Space, time and form are separate." All the objects of the universe are forms of *spandaśakti*.

78. *Svacchandatantra*.

32

Spandanirdeśa: The Indication of Spanda

359. We can recognize the principle of *spanda* through all the fluctuations that occur in us. We can recognize it in the waveless state that we experience within for a fraction of a moment when we are involved in such activities as reading, running, or being afraid, furious, or astonished and also while we are pronouncing the syllables known as *visargas*. It can be neither clearly defined nor understood by others.

सा च दृश्या हृदुद्देशे कार्यस्मरणकालतः।
प्रहर्षविदसमये दरसन्दर्शनक्षणे ॥९॥
अनलोचनतो दृष्टे विसर्गप्रसरास्पदे
विसर्गोक्तिप्रसङ्गे च वाचने धावने तथा॥
एतेष्वेवं प्रसङ्गेषु सर्वशक्तिविलोलता ॥[79]

This means that we experience stillness for a fraction of a moment while reading, running, being afraid, furious, astonished, and pronouncing *visargas*. We experience that stillness in the first moment of meeting someone we love and in our astonishment as we watch

79. Somananda, *Śivadṛṣṭi*, 1.9, 10, 11ab.

a magic show. We can recognize the *spanda* principle in this state, which lasts a fraction of a moment.

> विचित्ररचनानानाकार्यसृष्टिप्रवर्तने ।
> भवत्युन्मुखिता चित्ता सेच्छायाः प्रथमा तुटिः ॥[80]
>
> When the readiness arises to create diversity outside, that is the first movement of the *icchāśakti* of Consciousness.

That readiness is *spanda*.

360. The expansion of *spandaśakti* takes two forms – general and specific – and therefore Shaivites have given it two names: *sāmānyaspanda*, or general *spanda*, and *viśeṣaspanda*, or specific *spanda*. In its general form, it is unity in diversity. In its specific form, it is diversity in unity. The general form of that *spandaśakti* is the immanent, subtle Consciousness, or *prāṇa*, which pervades all the innumerable objects of the universe. In its specific form, duality predominates and the *spandaśakti* becomes the many unique names, forms, and objects of experience.

The power of *spanda* is free and eternal, flowing inward and outward simultaneously. *Spanda* is the power that throbs unceasingly. When the world began there was an initial explosion or pulsation. Scientists also recognize that this vibratory power created the world and is constantly throbbing in the universe. It has existed since the beginning of time and will continue to pulsate eternally.

361. God's own initial *spanda*, or throb, has become sound and vibrates incessantly. The world exists within

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80. Somananda, *Śivadṛṣṭi*, 1.8.

us in a seed form. It is *spanda* that manifests it outwardly on such a colossal scale.

> या सा शक्तिर्जगद्धातुः कथिता समवायिनी।
> इच्छात्वं तस्य सा देवी सिस्रुक्षो प्रतिपद्यते ॥[81]
>
> When God's independent Shakti, who is inseparable from Him, is ready to flow out into the forms of the universe, She first takes the form of *icchā*.

The *Ṛgveda* states that before the moment of creation the Lord said, एको ऽहं बहु स्यामः।— "I am alone; let Me become many." As that *icchāśakti* unfolds, it manifests as *jñānaśakti* and *kriyāśakti*.

> एवं सैषा द्विरूपा ऽपि पुनर्भेदैरनेकतां।
> अर्थोपाधिवशाद्याति चिन्तामणिरिवेश्वरी ॥
>
> Because the Shakti in Her supremacy possesses both the power of knowledge and the power of action, She is the wish-fulfilling gem.[82]

She continually unfolds in order to create objects (*prameya*) and branches out in infinite currents. As a result, She expands to form the multiplicity of the universe, from Shiva to the earth. Shakti, through the power of knowledge, flows through the three paths of *varṇa*, *pada* and *mantra*.[83] Through the power of action, She flows through the other three paths of *kalā*, *tattva* and *bhuvana*.[84] In this way, She assumes the forms of the outer universe. The expansion of the entire universe of sound takes place in the form of the first three paths, and the universe of matter in the form of the latter three paths. Both of these come into existence through *spanda*.

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81. *Mālinīvijayatantra*, 3.5.

82. A jewel having the power to fulfil all desires.

83 & 84. See Glossary.

33

Anusandhāna of Spandaśakti: Contemplation of Spanda Shakti

362. एकचिन्ताप्रसक्तस्य यतः स्यादपरोदयः।
उन्मेषः स तु विज्ञेयः स्वयं तमुपलक्षयेत् ॥[85]

The experience that arises within us when we move from one thought or feeling to another is called *unmeśa*. One should know it by looking within.

This must be understood primarily through experience. From one vibration, another arises. *Bindu* (light), *nāda* (sound), *rūpa* (form), *rasa* (taste) and so on, arise from *spanda*.

363. Through the power of *spanda*, an ignorant person is driven to perform actions. Even if he has spiritual longing, because of the influence of *spanda* he does not notice it. When the experience of *aham*, "I am", arises everywhere, one can see the *spanda* principle governing omniscience and the other qualities associated with it.

85. Ramakantha, *Vivṛtti* to the *Spandakārikās*, 4.11.

364. Through effort, a person can come to know the true nature of the universe. But even after he knows it, he must be vigilant. Only if he seeks the Supreme Principle one-pointedly will he avoid being tortured by other things.

> प्रबुद्धः सर्वदा तिष्ठेज्ज्ञानेनालोच्य गोचरम्।
> एकत्रारोपयेत्सर्वं ततो ऽन्येन न पीड्यते॥[86]
>
> A *yogī* should be very alert after achieving the true vision of the world. He should maintain awareness of the unity of the whole, and then there will be no "other" to trouble him.

In other words, if, through knowledge, a person one-pointedly contemplates the *spanda* of the universe, then the world of duality causes him no trouble or pain.

365. Infinite powers arise from groups of letters. One who falls victim to them is ignorant. An ignorant person is not independent because he lacks the feeling of supreme bliss. Groups of letters are always ready to conceal his true nature. Bondage consists of not knowing the glory of the *śakticakra* (the group of powers that controls the inner and outer worlds), whereas liberation and all other attainments are the result of knowing it. A person who is bound and under the control of the mind, intellect, ego and subtle body experiences pain and pleasure. This is called *saṃsāra*, or worldly existence.

> सेयं क्रियात्मिका शक्तिः शिवस्य पशुवर्तिनी।
> बन्धयित्री स्वमार्गस्था ज्ञाता सिद्ध्युपपादिका॥[87]

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86. Ibid., 4.14.
87. Ibid., 4.18.

> Realizing that the same *kriyāśakti* of Shiva is a binding force in a bound soul, and the path to Reality in a soul with right understanding, is the way to reveal the Supreme Power.

A seeker masters the *śakticakra* when he becomes aware, through stillness and oneness, that the undifferentiated *spanda* principle is everywhere.

366. In reality, the essence of knowledge takes three forms: In pain and pleasure, it is dual; in experiences and memories, it is both dual and non-dual; and in the awareness of one's own Self, it is non-dual. It becomes manifold according to a person's individual *spanda*, or vibration. The variations in the universe are infinite. Because of the glory of *spandaśakti*, everything appears to be different according to its qualities, actions, shape, activities and changes. On the level of duality, differences among objects are measured by their rate of vibration rather than their essence. While contemplating the *spanda* principle, a person experiences the ebb and flow of the world as *idam*, objective, and *aham*, subjective. In the play of Shiva's immanent aspect, the experience of the limited "I" (*ahaṃtā*) predominates. In His transcendent aspect, the perfect "I" (*pūrṇāhaṃtā*) predominates.

367. Just as one's senses carry out their work through the power of the conscious Shakti, the experiencers who have become serene and pure obtain undifferentiated awareness through the power of the *spanda* principle. They become manifest and then merge once again. Therefore they have the characteristics of Shiva and are Shiva.

368. तस्मात्सर्वमयो जीवः सर्वभावसमुद्भवात्।

An individual is everywhere. He contains all feelings. The entire universe is his form.

For this reason, he has the awareness of unity. There are no sounds or meanings that are not Shiva.

तत्संवेदनरूपेण तादात्म्यप्रतिपत्तितः।

In this state of oneness, one experiences the unity of sounds and their meanings without any sense of differences.

भोक्तैव भोग्यभावेन सदा सर्वत्र संस्थितः।[88]

The experiencer himself exists always and everywhere in the form of objective experience.

Shiva, the experiencer, is everywhere at all times as the object of experience. That which is experienced is also the experiencer.

इति वा यस्य संवित्तिः क्रीडात्वेनाखिलं जगत्।
स पश्यन्सततं युक्तो जीवन्मुक्तो न संशयः॥[89]

He who regards the entire universe as the play of the Universal Consciousness is Paramashiva and is liberated while in the body.

If that awareness arises in the mind of a meditator, he becomes identical with Shiva, merges in Him and attains supreme bliss. This is called *śivanirvāṇadīkṣā* and gives rise to the feeling that one is Supreme Shiva. This unwavering awareness constitutes the knowledge of the Self. It makes one enter the city of supreme bliss. This is called the arising of pure knowledge (*vidyodaya nisyanda*).

88. Ramakantha, *Vivṛtti* to the *Spandakārikās*, 3.2cd. 89. Ibid.

369. Enlightened beings attach little importance to the disparities and differences of the external world or to the favourable or unfavourable conditions in their lives. The outlook of an enlightened being ignores disparity and focuses on the inner *spanda* principle. An awakened being constantly experiences this *spanda* principle, but an ordinary person perceives it only at the beginning and end of his life.

370. Unity is simply the state of not perceiving duality. This is the knowledge of Shiva. This unity-awareness is also called *bindu*. The abode of God's power, which is also called the mighty Shakti Kundalini, is the Self. When Shiva joins with Shakti, He obtains the power to create. Therefore Shakti is the mother of the universe. The entire universe is filled with this Supreme Shakti. Shakti is in the universe and the universe is in Shakti. Shakti is not different from the universe, just as the sun is not different from its light. This is the *spanda-nirṇaya* of Shaivism. It is the inner knowledge of the great beings as well as the sublime knowledge that redeems the world. A person who lacks knowledge is blind. Knowledge is vision, nectar, love and bliss. It is the ecstasy of Shaivism.

371. यत्र स्थितमिदं सर्वं कार्यं यस्माच्च निर्गतम्।
तस्यानावृत्तरूपत्वान्न निरोधो ऽस्ति कुत्रचित्॥[90]

For Him, in whom the whole objective world is revealed and from whom it arises, no obstruction is possible, because of His unshrouded nature.

The effect, or the world of experienced objects (*prameya*), exists in an undifferentiated form within Shiva, who is the cause. Thus Shiva is the substratum

90. Ramakantha, *Vivṛtti* to the *Spandakārikās.*

of awareness, which is of the nature of *spanda*. Through Him, the world manifests outwardly. Nothing can veil the true essence of the Supreme Reality.

372. Even in the state of worldliness, nothing veils the essential nature of the Supreme Reality, which is *aham vimarśa*, or pure I-awareness. It is the state of unity. Because it is omnipotent, nothing anywhere can prevent it from flowing freely. It has inconceivable power to do or undo anything. It is also called Shiva.

तव च महिमा वाङ्मनसयोर् ।[91] – "Your glory is beyond mind and speech." He is limitless and beyond imagination. He is the One in the many, filled with sweetness. He is sweeter than the sweetest and supremely auspicious. Although He has created the universe in His own being, He Himself is pure and taintless.

पवित्राणां पवित्रं यो मङ्गलानां च मङ्गलम् ।
दैवतं देवतानां च भूतानां यो ऽव्ययः पिता ॥[92]

He is purer than the pure. He is supremely auspicious. He is the Lord of all celestial beings and mortals. He is the indestructible father of all beings.

373. To manifest the universe, He flows through the currents of His infinite powers, yet remains perfect. Shakti Herself is the perfect state of Her Lord. His form is divine. He throbs with the awareness of *pūrṇo 'ham* – "I am perfect." Therefore His nature is bliss.

दिक्कालकलनोन्मुक्ता देशोद्देशाविशेषिणी ।
व्यपदेष्टुमशक्यासावकथ्या परमार्थतः ॥[93]

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91. *Śiva Mahimna Stotram*, 2a.
92. *Viṣṇusahasranāma*, 10.
93. *Vijñānabhairava*, 14.

> He is beyond limitations of direction, time and objects. He is beyond limitations of distance, both near and far. Because He cannot be the subject of either subtle or articulated speech, He is indescribable and can be experienced only from within.

नापि तर्काप्रतिष्ठानात् ।– "He cannot be confined to logic or reasoning." वितर्कात्मज्ञानम् ।[94] -- "Unwavering awareness [that 'I am Shiva'] constitutes the knowledge of the Self." This is called the state of Bhairavi, which is free from the meshes of thought and the afflictions of doubt. This state is the essential nature of Bhairava, or Shankara. It is also called *śivāvasthā*, the state of Shiva. In this state, both the immanent and the transcendent coexist in unity. The immanent aspect consists of the entire universe of matter and conscious beings; the transcendent aspect is supremely pure and changeless. Both aspects are His. He alone, in the form of *spanda*, exists in His immanent aspect from Sadashiva to an ant or a blade of grass. This universe exists in an undifferentiated form as an object of knowledge within *spandaśakti*.

One of the five actions of Parameshwara is to manifest through *spandaśakti* the universe, which is concealed within Him in a seed form. This becomes the outer universe. The Self of the universe exists in the form of the universe. This is Paramashiva's independent play. If one has understanding, he sees the world as the Lord; without understanding, he sees it merely as the world. Truly, the world is the divine play of God's supreme bliss. There is only bliss, independence and perfection. The One is in one, and the same One is in many. *Namaḥ śivāya!*

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94. *Śivasūtras*, 1.17.

34

Vedānta

374. Vedanta is a true and sublime philosophy, the knowledge of which was produced when the sages churned the ocean of Truth. There is a saying: वेदान्तवाक्येषु सदा रमन्तः खलु भाग्यवन्तः। – "One who constantly revels in the words of Vedanta is extremely fortunate."

Vedanta literally means "the end of the *Vedas*". Like the *Vedas* themselves, the words of Vedanta are great *mantras* and contain a lofty teaching. The question may arise, "What is the purpose of Vedanta?" Vedanta explains what true happiness is and awakens humanity. It puts cowardice to flight. It reveals the inner Truth. In essence, the purpose and doctrine of Vedanta are the cessation of all pain and the attainment of bliss.

What is the root of all pain? That is what we will consider now. अज्ञानप्रभवं सर्वम्।[95] – "Ignorance is the root cause of all suffering." स्वस्वरूपविस्मरणम्। – "It is also the forgetfulness of one's own Self." Not to know one's own Self is ignorance. A human being's predicament is that he has forgotten himself. He thinks about others and dwells on their faults, wasting the priceless years of his life by uselessly envying and criticizing others.

95. Shankaracharya, *Aparokṣānubhūti*, 17.

What greater ignorance can there be? Ignorance is the city of utter darkness. Unless a person transcends it, he cannot find perfect contentment.

> नोत्पद्यते विना ज्ञानं विचारेणान्यसधनैः।
> यथा पदार्थभानं हि प्रकाशेन विना क्वचित्।[96]
>
> Just as objects cannot be seen without light, one cannot attain knowledge except through contemplation of the Self.

One should contemplate only the Self. Instead of looking at external objects, one should turn within and contemplate the Self by means of the mind. Self-enquiry should be as follows:

> को ऽहं कथमिदं जातं को वै कर्ता ऽस्य विद्यते।
> उपादानं किमस्तीह विचारः सो ऽयमीदृशः॥[97]
>
> Who am I? How did this world come into existence? Who is its creator? What is the material cause of the world?

In reality, the world exists only in our imagination. Suppose that a rope is lying on the ground and we see it as a snake and become afraid. There was never a snake in the rope. The snake appeared because of an optical illusion, a delusion on the part of the observer. In this way we fear our own imaginary snake and become the cause of our own pain or pleasure.

अज्ञानप्रभवं सर्वं ज्ञानेन प्रविलीयते।[98] – "Everything is produced by ignorance and dissolves in the wake of knowledge." All pain, disappointment, weakness, mental

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96. Shankaracharya, *Aparokṣānubhūti*, 11.
97. Ibid., 12
98. Ibid., 17.

disturbance, jealousy, enmity, envy and so on, are the progeny of ignorance. These things that make a person unhappy are destroyed through knowledge. Ignorance arises from various mental constructs, and only knowledge can counteract it. The world of thoughts is the source of one's pain. This is what Vedanta states.

What is the purpose of Vedanta? This is the primary question. Its purpose is to put an end to all pain forever and to enable us to attain supreme bliss. Once this bliss is attained, it can never be destroyed. A person may ask, "Even if all pain goes away, can it not return? Even if supreme bliss is attained, can it not be destroyed?" However, the real teaching of Vedanta is that the ignorance that is destroyed never really existed. To destroy ignorance and attain bliss is to destroy what never was and to attain what we have always had. Therefore ignorance is not valid because it is merely a figment of our imagination; we should discard it through proper understanding. The Self of all, which is extremely subtle, is forever attained. Because of ignorance, we do not see it; therefore we think we have not attained it. Since it is already ours, we attain what was already attained. आत्मा तु सततं प्राप्तौ – "The Self is already attained."

वायुनानीयते मेघः पुनस्तेनैव नीयते।
मनसा कल्प्यते बन्धो मोक्षस्तेनैव कल्प्यते॥

Clouds come into being because of the wind and vanish because of the wind. Similarly, the mind is responsible for bondage as well as liberation.

375. Actually bondage is not real. Shaivism declares it to be the glory of *mātṛkāśakti*. Once the creations of the mind dissolve, the idea of liberation also vanishes. Then

the true Principle is just as it always was, perfect and unchanging. Enlightened beings have divided the world of names, forms and objects into three kinds of reality: *prātibhāsika sattā*, the apparent reality of the dream state; *vyāvahārika sattā*, the reality of the waking state; and *pāramārthika sattā*, Absolute Reality.

As long as delusion exists, dreams appear. This is *prātibhāsika sattā*. Once the delusion is destroyed, that reality also vanishes. That which appears empirically at one time and not another – just as *Śrī Gurugītā* is chanted only in the morning and not at night – is *vyāvahārika sattā*, the reality of the waking state. The One who is experienced through knowledge as the Self of all in the continual play of Consciousness is *pāramārthika sattā*. That is also called the true Self, Brahman, one's own true nature, and the Absolute Reality. That One is experienced in the state of equanimity, or *samādhi*. It is the awareness of the Self of all.

सदिदं परमाद्वैतं स्वस्मादन्यस्य वस्तुनो ऽभावात् ।
न ह्यन्यदस्ति किञ्चित्सम्यक्परमार्थतत्त्वबोधदशायाम् ॥[99]

In reality, only total unity, which is the embodiment of supreme bliss, is the true Principle. There is nothing other than the Self. Once a person has the knowledge of the Principle of the Self, there is no longer any other.

सद्ब्रह्माकाराय सकलं सदैव – "The entire world, which is the effect of the true Brahman, is made of His own nature." Because the effect is not separate from the cause, the world is the play of Brahman. Anyone who says that the world is different from God is still ignorant. His speech is nonsense, like that of a person who is dreaming. Vedanta says, सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म । – "Everything

99. Shankaracharya, *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 226.

is Brahman." Everything is real; nothing is different from Consciousness. Just as emptiness is full of space and cloth is permeated by thread, Brahman pervades the entire world. Just as liquidity is in water as water, light is in a flame as the flame, fragrance is in camphor as camphor, activity is inherent in the body, and gold is in both nuggets and ornaments, similarly the Knower, God or Brahman is the primordial cause of the entire world, and His image appears in all. When a stream twists and winds, the water also appears to be crooked, although in reality it is not. When iron is heated it looks red, but the redness belongs to the fire, not to the iron. In the same way, the principle of Consciousness appears as the world because of the deception created by ignorance, but that Consciousness never becomes ignorant.

Brahman, or Consciousness, appears as the mind, senses, *guṇas* and other principles. However, just as sweetness does not depend on the shape of the sweets, Brahman does not depend on the *guṇas, sattva, rajas* and *tamas*. Just as ghee is in milk but is not milk, the entire world is in Brahman yet is not Brahman. In this way, we should clearly understand that Brahman is different from the senses and their *guṇas*. All words, names, forms, relationships and activities are related to the world of forms, not to Brahman. Brahman cannot be the *guṇas*; the *guṇas* are reflected in Him. An ignorant person thinks that the *guṇas* are one with Brahman. This kind of understanding is as deluded as saying that the sky is one with the clouds, a mirror is one with its reflections, or water is one with the sun that it reflects. Likewise, it is useless to say that Brahman contains *guṇas*. There is actually no relationship between Brahman and *guṇas*. When a beggar dreams that he is a

king and enjoys sense pleasures, it is unreal, a mere dream. Similarly, to think that the formless Brahman experiences *guṇas* is nothing but delusion. The *guṇas* experience themselves. The *guṇas* in the form of the senses move among the *guṇas* in the form of sense objects. The *guṇas* are under the control of the Supreme Reality and carry out their respective functions. All actions take place under the direction of the Supreme Principle.

376. Although sparks of fire are of different sizes, their heat is the same. Similarly, the same Brahman pervades in His fullness all sentient beings and insentient objects. In this way the indestructible One permeates everything in a subtle form. We should come to know Him. He is inside as well as outside the body. He is both near and far. He is the One without a second.

In the ocean of milk,[100] the sweetness is no greater in the middle than near the shore. In the same way, the One who is all-pervasive and perfect completely pervades all the various beings and creatures, those born of egg, sweat, seed and womb. O seekers! The moon may be reflected in thousands of pots, yet it is only one. Although there are countless grains of salt, they all share the same quality of saltiness. The same sweetness exists in different pieces of sugarcane. The One has become both matter and consciousness, both movable and immovable things, yet remains different from all.

बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च।[101] – "The One pervades all beings, inside and outside, movable and immovable." अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम्।[102] – "In creatures,

100. A legendary ocean, described in the *Purāṇas*, which the gods and demons churned in order to extract various divine gifts.

101. *Bhagavadgītā*, 13.15ab.

He is undivided although He appears to be divided." In this way, the One who pervades all equally and who is the primordial cause of the creation of the universe has created all beings and is the substratum of them all. Just as the body is the basis of childhood, maturity and old age, that One is the basis of the three processes of creation, preservation and dissolution. Just as the sky remains unaffected by the passing of morning, noon and night, Consciousness remains unaffected by these processes. The One is called Brahma during creation, Vishnu during preservation, Rudra during dissolution, and Consciousness when these three processes have ceased. Consciousness swallows the great void of the ether and remains as the witness of the void. It is the Knower of all.

ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिः। – "That Supreme Principle is the light of all lights." It is the nectar of the moon and the brilliance of the sun. Receiving light from Consciousness, the stars twinkle. The Supreme Principle is the supreme brilliance of the sun. The Supreme Principle is the Supreme Light. It is the fundamental cause of everything in the universe. It is the intellect of the intellect, the *prāṇa* of the *prāṇa*, the mind of the mind, the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear, the speech of speech, the movement of movement.

377. The creation of forms, their expansion, preservation and destruction all proceed from That. That supports the earth through its own power. It is the essence of water. Light exists because of that Principle. It is the power behind the movement of the wind, and because of it the ether is everywhere. We should come to know

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102. Ibid., 13.16ab.

that Supreme Principle. It has not the slightest trace of duality. By perceiving it, the seer, the process of seeing and the seen merge together. When *sādhanā* and its goal become one, the knowledge of Brahman dawns. Brahman is that that is known. When counting ceases, numbers are of equal value; they are all composed of ones. Similarly, once Brahman is attained, the concepts of both the means and the end vanish.

हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम् ।[103] – "The same Parabrahman exists eternally in the hearts of all." One who sees no differences among all existing creatures attains the bliss of Parabrahman in this very body. Although thousands of lamps may be blazing, the light in all of them is the same.

समं पश्यन् हि सर्वत्र ।[104] – "He sees God equally everywhere." If a person leads his life seeing God and all beings as identical, he becomes liberated in this lifetime. He does not get caught on the wheel of birth and death. With this wisdom of equality and oneness he sleeps comfortably in a bed of bliss and fearlessness. Such a person is fortunate; he is a great seeker. He becomes a supreme *yogī* as well as a Siddha.

शरीरस्थो ऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ।[105] – "O Arjuna! Although he lives in the body, He neither does anything nor is touched by anything. Although the sun is reflected in water, it remains detached from it. Similarly, although God dwells in the body, He remains supremely pure. Most ignorant people commit a grave error by considering themselves to be sinners. When the pure Self constantly dwells within them, how can they be sinners? The body is the divine temple of God, who resides in

103. *Bhagavadgītā*, 13.17d.

104. Ibid., 13.28a.

105. Ibid., 13.31cd.

the heart. If you wish to find Him, seek Him in your heart. हृदि सन्निविष्टम् । – "He lives in the heart."

378. Ignorant people consider the reflection of the sun in water to be the sun – but the sun is unchanging. It exists before the water appears and after it vanishes. Similarly, although it is correct to say that the Self is in the body, still, it existed before the body came into being and will continue to exist after the body dies. Just as our own faces can be seen in a mirror, so the Self exists in the body. The Self is neither the doer nor the non-doer; it is neither thin nor fat; it is neither visible nor invisible; it is neither lustrous nor dull. The true nature of the Self is supreme bliss, not sorrow. The Self always remains as it is. Just as day and night come and go in the heavens, similarly countless bodies come and go in the Self; however the Self always remains detached from those bodies. The Self is everywhere in all bodies but it is never attached to bodily actions.

379. The Supreme Principle is the Self, which transcends the pervasiveness of ether. It is on the opposite shore from the material world, where there is no distinction between unity and disparity. In that place all forms disappear, individual existence is extinguished, and there are neither nightmares nor phantoms. That is the resting place of the Self. *Yogīs* and enlightened beings rest in that perfect bliss.

Only those who have received the grace of the Guru and are adept at discriminating between the Self and the non-Self can grasp the Supreme Principle. One who has merged into the Guru, the embodiment of wisdom, who has become him, who has merged into the all-pervasive

Consciousness, who has become both immanent and transcendent, who has lost his sense of duality, and who has become ecstatic in supreme bliss and complete in his perfection, dwells in all and all dwell in him. He is God incarnate. He is the Consciousness of Consciousness. Such an enlightened being is blessed. He is God walking and speaking in the form of a human being.

35

Pratyabhijñāsāra: The Essence of the Doctrine of Recognition

380. A great Siddha, Kshemaraja, summarized the Pratyabhijna philosophy. His book, the *Pratyabhijñā-hṛdayam*, contains only twenty aphorisms, but it is not just a small book; it is a sublime philosophy. It is easy even for ordinary people to understand, but easiest for those who have received the grace of *śaktipāta* from God or from the Guru.

शक्तिपातोन्मिषितपारमेश्वरसमावेशाभिलाषिणः। [106] – "For those who aspire to it, *samāveśa*, or mergence with Shiva, blossoms with the descent of Shakti." *Śaktipāta* is the compassionate will of Paramashiva; it is also called grace. *Śaktipāta* received from the Guru or from God inspires us to walk on the path of Self-knowledge. The compassion of Paramashiva, the Guru, takes the form of *śaktipāta*. The *Śivasūtravimarśinī* says, गुरुर्वा पारमेश्वरी अनुग्राहिका शक्तिः। – "The Guru is the grace-bestowing

106. Kshemaraja, *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, commentary on 1.

power of God." *Śaktipāta* is given so that one can experience one's own Self. *Śaktipāta* is described in the *Vedas*, the *Upaniṣads*, the *Tantras* and other scriptures.

The *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam* begins by describing Chiti, God's power, which is inseparable from Him, and ends with a description of the state of Chiti. The first aphorism is चितिः स्वतन्त्रा विश्वसिद्धिहेतुः।– "Supremely independent Chiti is the cause of the [manifestation, maintenance and reabsorption of the] universe." Chiti is the glorious Parashakti who is the cause of all the principles from Sadashiva to the earth. She is the origin of the universe. She also causes one to repose in Paramashiva and to merge into Him.

381. The expansion of the world of sentient beings and insentient objects is the doing of Chiti. Although Chiti Herself creates the world, sustains it and finally merges it into Herself, nothing can limit Her true nature. It is an established truth that Chiti is all-pervasive, ever-blissful and perfect. She is the primordial mother of the universe.

> ग्राह्यग्राहकसंवित्तिः सामान्या सर्वदेहिताम्।[107]
>
> Both *grāhya*, the seen, and *grāhaka*, the seer, are the Universal Consciousness.

Abhinavagupta states:

> एवं देशकालास्पर्शाद्विभुत्वं च सकलदेशकालस्पर्शोऽपि तन्निर्माणयोगातिति ततोऽपि व्यापकत्वनित्यत्वे।
>
> She is beyond the limits of space and time, and She is all-pervasive and eternal. The limitations of space and time are the effects of Her creation.

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107. *Vijñānabhairava*, 106ab.

She transcends both of them. Therefore She is also called the Sublime Reality, the Great Goddess, and the Mother of the Universe. This same Chiti is the Maha Kundalini. She is of the nature of Parabrahman. Through Her grace alone, the spontaneous Kriya Yoga, also known as Maha Yoga or Siddha Yoga, takes place. Kundalini Chiti Shakti carries one who loves the Guru and has done *sādhanā* to the *sahasrāra* and merges that person in Shiva. Chiti Herself takes on a human form to become the Guru and carry out the function of *śaktipāta*. Through the power of Chiti alone, the universe is created and destroyed.

382. स्वेच्छया स्वभित्तौ विश्वमुन्मीलयति।[108]

Of her own free will, Chiti unfolds the universe on Her own screen.

Chiti, through Her own will, manifests the universe. Without depending on anything else for support, She manifests the universe of duality on Her own being. Like a city reflected in a mirror, that universe is inseparable from Her.

383. तन्नानानुरूपग्राह्यग्राहकभेदात्।[109]

That universe is manifold because of the differentiation of reciprocally adapted objects and subjects.

As Consciousness contracts, it takes the form of the universe. Although it is contracted, Consciousness still exists in its fullness. As it descends from its natural

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108. Kshemaraja, *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, 2.
109. Ibid., 3.

state of limitlessness, it contracts and becomes the objects perceived. Then it is called *citta*, the mind. In reality, the mind is nothing but the Goddess Chiti Herself. As She contracts, She conceals Her true nature. Chiti also becomes *māyā pramātā*, the individual soul governed by *māyā*. The *Śivasūtras* say, आत्मा चित्तम् ।[110] – "The individual Self is mind." It becomes the mind when *jñānaśakti*, the power of knowledge, is limited.

384. Although Chiti is one, She becomes twofold, threefold, fourfold, and of the nature of seven pentads (groups of five) with their thirty-five principles.[111] Then She is called a limited, transmigratory individual.

385. All philosophers speak of the same One according to their own languages and opinions.

386. When the Shakti of the Self contracts, She is known as a limited individual, subject to innumerable births and deaths. She remains a transmigratory soul as long as She is contracted, but once She expands She becomes Paramashiva.

387. In Her contracted form She is called the mind, but when the mind turns within and ascends to the status of Universal Consciousness, She is once again called Chiti. When one experiences this expanded state, one

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110. *Śivasūtras*, 3.1.

111. Twofold: the experiencer and the object of experience; threefold: the three *malas*, or impurities (*āṇavamala, māyīyamala, kārmamala*); fourfold: the void (*śunya*), the vital force (*prāṇa*), the subtle body (*puryaṣṭaka*), and the gross body (*śarīra*). For seven pentads, see Glossary.

has the knowledge of universality. When Chiti becomes objects, She is the mind, and when She becomes the Self, She is Chiti.

388. This is why it is essential for everyone to meditate. When the mind turns within in meditation, it becomes the light of Consciousness. Meditation is sublime alchemy. It is a mighty power that annihilates all pain. It is the seed *mantra* of humanity's glory. Meditation has the power to make a human being become the Lord, an individual become Shiva, and the soul become God. न हि ध्यानात्परा साधना। – "There is no *sādhanā* higher than meditation." There is no *mantra* higher than meditation. There is no power higher than meditation. When we attain the power of the Self, we become one with the universe. In reality, the universe is not different from us nor are we different from the universe. If anyone were to ask me what the universe is, I would say, "The universe is me."

389. Once a person attains the bliss of Consciousness, although bodily awareness remains he firmly perceives the Self as Consciousness. This is liberation while in the body and the supreme means of attaining bliss.

390. When the central *nāḍī* unfolds, one attains the bliss of Consciousness. Kundalini lies at the base of the *suṣumnā*, or central *nāḍī*. Through the Guru's grace, She is awakened, and one spontaneously attains the bliss of Consciousness. Kundalini, the supreme deity, is the embodiment of absolute bliss. Once She is awakened, how can one not be blissful? The entire world is

full of bliss. When this mighty Shakti is awakened, She permeates the whole body and remoulds a person in the image of supreme bliss.

391. By the unfoldment of the central *nāḍī*, one attains the bliss of Consciousness, which is the *samādhi* of *yogīs*. Supreme bliss is the highest *samādhi*. The essence of the perfect I-consciousness is light and bliss. It is nothing but the power of the great *mantra*. By entering that perfect I-consciousness, a person attains mastery over his group of deities of Consciousness. These deities bring about the creation, sustenance and reabsorption of the universe. This means that a person becomes God by merging into Him. He is God and becomes God. Even if he is not aware of it, he is still God. Muktananda says, "What exists without God? What is not God? If you have found Him, you have found Him. But even if you think you have not found Him, you have found Him. Nothing exists without Shiva."

36

The Vijñānabhairava

392. The *Vijñānabhairava* is an *āgama*. It is a text revealed by God and written in the form of questions and answers between Goddess Bhairavi and Lord Bhairava. Its fundamental teaching is the identity of Shiva and Shakti.

This divine work is incomparably great. Philosophical texts quote from the *Vijñānabhairava*. It is also used as an authoritative reference in other writings. The *Vijñānabhairava* is not only a great and universal work of literature, but the wisdom of Bhairava Himself. It is the wisdom of His own Self. It partakes of the true nature of the Supreme Principle, Vijnana Bhairava.[112]

393. Replying to the questions of the Goddess, Lord Shiva says, "Just as articles produced by a magician, things created by *māyā*, and objects seen in a dream have no real existence, the Lord's manifestation in *sakala* form does not really exist." *Sakala* means that that is perceived by the senses, mind, and intellect.

112. Paramashiva.

Everything from Brahma to an insect is referred to as *sakala*; Lord Shiva transcends all these things. In the scriptures, *sakala* is explained in detail for the sake of ignorant people who take interest in the deceptive objects of illusion. It is also said that the nature of *sakala* is described in the scriptures to prevent the ignorant from heading in the wrong direction. These descriptions encourage them to engage in *mantra* repetition, worship, prayer and other spiritual practices in order to become virtuous. After they have consistently performed these good actions and obtained the grace of the Supreme Guru, they may experience *niṣkala*, transcendental Consciousness.

It is impossible to describe the transcendental nature of Lord Bhairava. His true and essential nature is *nirvikalpa-bodha-svarūpa* – transcendental wisdom, or changeless awareness. It can be experienced only within. The entire universe is His play. In such a state, where there is nothing other than Supreme Reality, who worships whom? Who bestows grace on whom? The supreme nature of Lord Bhairava is also the nature of Paradevi. Like fire and its heat, they are inseparable.

न वह्नेर्दाहिका शक्तिः व्यतिरिक्ता विभाव्यते।
केवलं ज्ञानसत्तायां प्रारम्भो ऽयं प्रवेशने॥[113]

The burning power of fire is not different from fire. One finds this to be true even after pondering it deeply. It is described as separate only for the sake of the listener as a preliminary step towards knowing it.

Parashakti can never be different from Her Lord, Bhairava. Shakti makes one recognize His true existence. She is the primary means of experiencing His nature.

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113. *Vijñānabhairava*, 19.

394. Just as fire and its heat are not different, the wisdom of Bhairava and Parashakti is not separate. Just as fire is felt through heat, Shiva can be understood through the assistance of Parashakti. Parashakti is the door by which one reaches Shiva. Just as we can recognize a person by his face, similarly we recognize the essential nature of Shiva by coming to know Parashakti. Just as through the light of the sun or of a flame we can see in all directions, in the same way the knowledge of Shiva is acquired through Shakti.

395. After Lord Bhairava has explained this, the Goddess asks Him how to attain this Supreme Principle. In answer, Lord Shiva describes one hundred and twelve *dhāraṇās*, or centring techniques.

In this work, Parashakti, Chiti Shakti, Kundalini, and Maha Shakti are all synonymous. The Lord's essential nature in the state of unity is called Kali or Shakti, and in the state of duality it is called *prāṇaśakti*. प्राक्संवित्ति प्राणे परिणता।– "The Universal Consciousness itself becomes *prāṇa*." It has become the five *prāṇas* (*prāṇa, apāna* and so on) and permeates the body in order to make it function. In fact, as *sādhanā* unfolds, three things come together in the vibration of the *prāṇa-śakti*: the power of God, the power of the individual, and the individual's own effort. By merging the mind into the vibrating *prāṇāśakti* in the heart region, one attains the supreme state.

Actually it is impossible to merge into one's own Self because there is no reality other than the essential nature of the Self to merge with. Nor are the *upāyas* different from That. Therefore the entire world is the essence of Consciousness.

एतस्माज्जायते प्राणो मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च।
खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी॥[114]

From Consciousness emanates everything: the *prāṇa*, the mind, all the senses, ether, air, light (fire), water, and earth, the supporter of all.

Time cannot grasp it; space cannot divide it; limitations cannot bind it. It has no form. It cannot be comprehended through words. नापि प्रमाणगोचरात्। – "It cannot be understood through any *pramāṇas*" (means of knowledge such as direct perception, inference, or scriptural authority). This essential and true nature of the Self, which is independent and blissful, of its own accord gives forms to all the above-mentioned principles ranging from time to various *pramāṇas*. The entire universe is reflected in the pure I-consciousness of the Self and in the awareness "I am not different from the true Self." When this inner understanding is awakened in a seeker, he merges into the essential nature of the eternal God. There is no need for *mantra* repetition, worship, meditation, *āratī* and so on. These practices purify the psyche and the mind and make a person worthy by increasing the subtlety of his intellect. However, the Supreme Principle, which is the wisdom of Bhairava, is self-luminous and eternal. It is inside and outside everyone.

अन्तर्बहिश्च तत्सर्वं व्याप्य नारायणः स्थितः॥[115]

Lord Narayana [Bhairava] exists pervading and penetrating, within and without, everything that is perceived in the universe.

Whether one goes to the middle of the ocean or stays close to the shore, there is water. In the same way, the

114. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, 2.1.3.

115. *Nārāyaṇopaniṣad*, 10.90.

wisdom of Bhairava exists wherever one goes, wherever one looks, however one eats, drinks, plays, laughs or cries, and whatever one does. He sees all, knows all, experiences all, and sheds light on all. How could the poor eyes see without Bhairava? How could the poor ears hear without Him? Without the Self, could the cleverness of the fleshly tongue do anything with its net of words? How could the nose take interest in fragrance without His help?

Vijnana Bodha Bhairava is also called Paramashiva. What words can I write to describe Him? Without Him, would the *prāṇa* and *apāna*, the inhalation and exhalation, flow in and out ceaselessly day and night? Bhairava utters the syllable *ham* with the *apāna* and *so* with the *prāṇa* and exists in the junction point between them. He digests all food. He makes the blood circulate throughout the body. Everything is in Him and belongs to Him. He is everything. Bhairava knows everything everywhere at all times. No one can know Him, for He is the Knower of all. स्वे महिम्नि स्थितः। – "He exists in His own glory." He has eyes that see the entire world, but our eyes cannot see Him. A seeker is very fortunate if he can attain the vision of Him through the Guru's grace.

उपायजालं न शिवं प्रकाशयेद्
घटेन किं भाति सहस्रदीधितिः।
विवेचयन्नित्यमुदारदर्शनः
स्वयम्प्रकाशं शिवमाविशेत्क्षणात् ॥[116]

No mundane means can reveal Shiva. Can an inert clay pot illumine the shining sun? A being whose vision has expanded and who contemplates in this way merges into the essential nature of the self-luminous Shiva within.

116. Abhinavagugpta, *Tantrasāra*.

The *Saṃvitprakāśa* says:

> अपरोक्षे भवत्तत्त्वे सर्वतः प्रकटे स्थिते।
> यैरुपायाः प्रतन्यन्ते नूनं त्वां न विदन्ति ते॥
>
> Your nature and essence are manifest before the eyes of all. Even though this is so, if a person employs different means to see You, then it is certain that he does not know You.

Everyone already perceives the essential nature of Vijnana Bhairava, the Self. The world would not exist without Him. Realizing this, a seeker becomes established in his own true nature and becomes the Self of the universe, for he was that Self all along.

396. The basis of *prāṇa* and *apāna* is the space of the inner *dvādaśānta*, or inner heart, and the space of the outer *dvādaśānta*, or outer heart. In these spaces the activity of *prāṇa* and *apāna* ceases for a moment. For a fraction of a second, they "turn within" as *ham*, the sound of the inhalation, merges inside and *so*, the sound of the exhalation, merges outside. At that moment, one feels as though *prāṇa* and *apāna* have vanished somewhere. This space where they merge is called *madhyadaśā*. When it expands, one's vision of duality and one's feeling that others are different from oneself are gradually reduced. Eventually both one's outer and inner senses turn within completely.

397. मध्यविकासाच्चिदानन्दलाभः॥[117] – "By the unfoldment of the centre, there is acquisition of the bliss of Consciousness." The central *nāḍī* is Bhairavi. She is the face of Shiva. She is the primordial Shakti of all human

117. Kshemaraja, *Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam*, 17.

beings and of the entire world. Everything is Her doing. Bondage and liberation, pain and pleasure, high and low, honour and dishonour, poverty and wealth, knowledge and ignorance, supreme bliss and utter dryness are all the play of Shakti. When the Shakti is awakened in the space of the *madhyadaśā* and turns within, the movement of the *prāṇa* gradually merges into the *suṣumnā*, the central *nāḍī*. Then the real nature of Lord Bhairava is revealed by Parashakti Bhairavi. He is inseparable from Her.

Prāṇa moves in the heart, the throat, the palate, the forehead, the *brahmarandhra* at the crown of the head, and the *dvādaśānta*. If even for a moment the *prāṇa* dissolves in one of these locations and the *apāna* does not arise, then outer *kumbhaka*, or retention of breath, occurs effortlessly. Similarly, if the *apāna* dissolves for a moment in one of these locations and the *prāṇa* does not arise, then inner *kumbhaka* occurs. The space of *madhyadaśā* is called the supreme state. Only a *yogī* or enlightened being knows the *madhyadaśā* between the *prāṇa* and *apāna*. If a *yogī* turns inward even for a moment, the *madhyadaśā* expands within him and the *prāṇa* and *apāna* cease. The *Vijñānabhairava* says that he then becomes liberated.

398. To eliminate all doubts, Bhairava answers the questions of the Goddess and explains that supreme and true Principle that is fully experienced by all the great sages, ascetics, enlightened beings and *yogīs*.

O Bhairavi, Maha Shakti, primordial seed of the world! You are blessed. You are worthy of honour and worship. Listen. Now Bhairava is going to give the supremely secret answer to Your question. O Parabhairavi! The Supreme Principle, Consciousness. Sacchidananda is worthy of reverence. He is the ultimate Lord of all

and is worshipped in all religions as the supreme deity. He bestows grace according to a devotee's desire. The supreme state of this ancient Bhairava cannot be confined to different directions such as east and west or limited to the present moment or any other time. It is referred to as being both near and far. Although it is described in these terms, no adjective applies to it. We cannot limit it by describing it or referring to it in terms of space or time. It is difficult to understand its nature because it neither vibrates in *madhyamā*, the subtle level of speech, nor can it be expressed in *vaikharī*, articulated speech. Because the essential nature of the supreme state cannot be divided by space, time, name, form and so on, it is very difficult to come to know it through language.

When the perfect I-consciousness unfolds within, it is experienced as spontaneously surging bliss. This perfect I-consciousness unfolds when grace is received in the form of *śaktipāta*. Because its nature is totally free of all momentary fantasies, names, forms and other limitations, it is *nirvikalpa*, free of thoughts and modifications. This is the Truth. This state is the essential nature of the wisdom of Bhairava. It pervades the entire universe as *aham*. It is also reflected on the pure screen of one's own Self. It is not concealed by the impurities of the world. It illumines the entire universe. The Lord's *niṣkala*, or transcendental nature, is revealed in this supreme state. It has no form other than the experience of bliss.

399. After discussing the nature of the Supreme, Bhairava once again emphasizes the futility of rituals and objects associated with them. In the transcendental state, the state of Parabhairava or I-consciousness, who is there

to perform worship? Who will be propitiated by that worship? For a seeker, there is nothing else to worship or offer except the essential nature of his own Self. The worship, the worshipper, the object of worship and so on, are merely different aspects of the Supreme Principle. Its divine nature is Consciousness and bliss. When this is the case, all actions are futile compared with knowledge of the Self.

शक्तिशक्तिमतोर्यद्वदभेदः सर्वदा स्थितः।
अतस्तद्धर्मधर्मित्वात्पराशक्तिः परात्मनः। 118

It is certain that Shakti, the essential nature of Bhairava, is inseparable from Bhairava, the supreme state.

Shakti is power. This power is the true nature of Bhairava, who has created the entire world. Shakti and Her Lord are inseparable. The Shakti is called Bhairavi since She is associated with Bhairava and also with such qualities as omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence. She is not different from the Self, which is a mass of Consciousness and bliss.

शक्त्या विना शिवे सूक्ष्मे नामधाम न विद्यते।

Because Shiva is very subtle, He cannot be known without Shakti.

The essential point of the *Vijñānabhairava* is that one can perceive the identical nature of Shakti and Shiva only with the help of Parashakti. Therefore the Siddhas emphasize the need for *śaktipāta*, the awakening of the Shakti, and its unfoldment. *Śaktipāta* itself is Shakti. The entire world arises from Shiva just as a seed sprouts. A seed sprouts spontaneously when it is combined

118. *Vijñānabhairava*,18.

with such factors as soil and water. In the same way, when the Shakti is awakened through *śaktipāta* and the Guru's grace, the Shakti increases on Her own and makes a person one with Shiva. This Shakti is described as follows: सा स्फुरता महासत्ता –"She is the great vibrating Reality." She transforms Shiva into the world, and in the same way She transforms the individual soul into Shiva. She is also called the *spanda* principle.

400. What does the *Vijñānabhairava* teach us?

निजदेहे सर्वदिक्कंयुगपद्भावयेद्वियत् ।
निर्विल्पिमनास्तस्य वियत्सर्वं प्रवर्तते ।[119]

If a person contemplates empty space both in his body and in all directions simultaneously, without any thoughts, he experiences empty space all around him and identifies with the vast expanse of Consciousness.

A seeker should become one-pointed and free of thoughts. He should feel the all-pervasive Consciousness everywhere. He should feel it simultaneously (not sequentially) in the east, west, north and south as well as in his body. By practising this awareness he attains knowledge of the true state. As the feeling that the visible world is the Void, or Consciousness, becomes firmer, his own essential nature, the true Principle, is revealed. भावे हि विद्यते देवः । – "God exists in the power of feeling." In Maharashtra lived the great *yoginī* Bahinabai, who said, बहिणी म्हणे भाव इच्छाफलदायिनी । – "One's feeling yields the fruit of one's own desire." Therefore one should meditate with firm feeling.

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119. *Vijñānabhairava*, 43.

401. O beautiful one! A *yogī* merges his inner and outer senses, such as the mind and the eyes, into the sublime space that arises in the heart. This is the centre of *prāṇa* and *apāna*. Through his own feeling he enters the centre of the two bowls of the heart lotus and becomes established there in his own true nature. The upper bowl of the heart lotus represents knowledge; the lower bowl represents objects. The centre of the heart lotus represents Consciousness, or the Knower. Therefore a *yogī* who fixes his mind on Consciousness, and engages it in nothing else, attains the state of infinite bliss when the ecstasy of the grandeur of the Lord of the universe unfolds.

402. सर्वतः स्वशरीरस्य द्वादशान्ते मनोलयात् ।
दृढबुद्धेर्दृढीभूतं तत्त्वलक्ष्यं प्रवर्तते ॥[120]

A *yogī* experiences Reality when all parts of his body are penetrated by Consciousness and when his mind, which has become firm through one-pointedness, dissolves in the inner *dvādaśānta*.

The central *nāḍī*, or *suṣumnā*, is also known as the *dvādaśānta*. A *yogī* merges into the sublime, thought-free state when the Deity of Consciousness enters every pore of his body as the light of Kundalini that has been awakened in the central *nāḍī*. By merging into the *dvādaśānta*, the space where the breath dissolves, all the impressions of the *yogī's* mind are weakened, his mind becomes more one-pointed, and he continues to progress steadily. Finally he reaches the state of repose in the Self.

120. Ibid., 50.

403. This pure knowledge of Consciousness arises naturally. A seeker or a *yogī* should focus this knowledge on any one of the previously mentioned locations. At every moment, again and again, he should try to make the mind one-pointed there. When he does this, the tendencies of his mind become calm, and he soon attains the unique inner knowledge of Bhairava. This is a centring technique. Perfection is only a dream without meditation and a centring technique. The *Vijñānabhairava* says that meditation and the practice of centring techniques are impossible without the inner awakening.

404. ईदृशेन क्रमेणैव यत्र कुत्रापि चिन्तना।
शून्ये कुड्ये परे पात्रे स्वयं लीना वरप्रदा॥[121]

> In this way, whenever one concentrates in successive steps on empty space, a wall or a noble person, that concentration is absorbed by itself into the Supreme and grants the highest spiritual experience.

One should practise focusing on the *mūladhāra* at the base of the spine, the womb (*janma*), the sacral plexus (*kanda*), the navel, the heart, the throat, the palate, the space between the eyebrows, the forehead, the *brahmarandhra* in the crown of the head, and Shakti, either in successive stages or singly. Besides the body, one can also focus on empty space, a noble person or a being who has a pure mind. वीतरागविषयं वा चित्तम्।[122] – "Focus the mind on a being who has risen above passion and attachment." When a seeker practises these techniques steadfastly day and night, when he remembers and contemplates a being whose attachment and aversion

121. *Vijñānabhairava*, 33.

122. *Pātañjaliyogasūtras*, 1.37.

have been destroyed, his mind merges spontaneously into the Self, and he has the highest spiritual experience. These techniques bring the sublime experience of the Supreme Light blazing forth.

सर्वोत्तीर्णरूपं सोपानपदक्रमेण संश्रयतः।
परतत्त्वरूढिलाभे पर्यन्ते शिवमयीभावः॥ 123

By climbing step by step, the *yogī* reaches the highest stage of oneness with Shiva.

The sacral plexus, the navel, the heart, the throat, the subtle principles of *bindu* and *nāda*, and Shakti all function as steps to the Supreme Principle. When a person climbs steps, he leaves each one behind as he proceeds to the next until he reaches his destination. In the same way, a *yogī* leaves one stage behind when he proceeds to another until he finally reaches the highest and most exalted state of all. Then he himself becomes Shiva.

Identification with unity arises by reflecting on the supreme state and by merging into one's own Self with the awareness "I am That." Having this recognition of the Self is the basis for right identification. This matter is explained in the *Spandakārikās*:

यस्मात्सर्वमयो जीवः सर्वभावसमुद्भवात्।
तत्संवेदनरूपेण तादात्म्यप्रतिपत्तितः॥ 124

The individual soul is identical with the whole universe because the origin of all things is attributed to him and because he attains universality through his knowledge of the whole.

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123. *Paramārthasāra.*

124. Vasugupta, *Spandakārikās*, 2.3.

The individual is everything. He is identical with the universe because he is the knower of all objects, and all objects take birth from him. He, as the knower, is one with both knowledge and the means of knowing. In the state of oneness, the universe of sound (i.e. Consciousness vibrating as sound) and the universe of matter are not different. There is no state that is not illumined by Consciousness, the nature of Shiva. From this, it becomes very clear that the nature of Shiva, or Consciousness, which is light, is also revealed as the known. Therefore, from our own experience we can say unhesitatingly that the individual is everything. When a seeker has this knowledge, the perfect knowledge "I am everything" arises automatically in him. He considers the entire world a playground where he can walk joyfully. Such a person, seeing equality, becomes liberated even while in the body. There is no doubt about this.

405. अनाहते पात्रकर्णे ऽभग्नशब्दे सरिद्द्रुते।
शब्दब्रह्मणि निष्णातः परं ब्रह्माधिगच्छति ॥[125]

> One who is steeped in *nāda* – which is the Absolute in the form of sound, which is the unstruck sound (*anāhata*) vibrating within, which can be heard only by the ear that becomes sensitive through *yoga*, which resounds uninterruptedly, and which rushes headlong like a river – attains the Absolute.

Just as the water of a stream flows continuously, in the same way inside the body ten different kinds of subtle, unstruck sounds – great, mysterious and unique music – go on spontaneously and unceasingly day in and day out. When this *nāda* ceases to vibrate in the body, one's

125. *Vijñānabhairava*, 38.

last day has come; one's earthly passport expires, and one is taken to the cremation ground. Throughout the universe, that divine sound has been vibrating from time immemorial; even modern scientists believe that a mighty vibration is constantly reverberating. This is true. Once this vibration ceases, there will be a great deluge and the world will become desolate. All men, women, mountains and cities will merge into the void.

It is generally considered that sound cannot be created unless two objects are struck together. But the *nādabhaṭṭāraka*, the Lord in the form of sound, is not produced in the body by the striking of one thing against another. Instead, it emanates spontaneously from the entire body. It constantly vibrates in every blood cell and in all the seven constituents of the body. For this reason it is called unstruck sound. Kabir Sahib wrote:

> गगन मण्डल में वर्षा होयी अमि के कुण्ड उलट गये री।
> सद्गुरु मिले सारे दुख बिसरे अन्तर के पथ खुल गये री॥
>
> In the inner space of the *sahasrāra*, the divine music is resounding. Because of that divine sound, nectar is released. I have become ecstatic from drinking it continuously. I have found the Sadguru. My inner divinity has been revealed to me, and all my pain has vanished.

To hear this sound, we have to make our ears sensitive. When two things are struck together on the outside, the ears perceive the sound, but the divine sound continually emanates within without anything being struck. Until the ears become sensitive through the practice of *yoga* they cannot hear that divine sound. That sound is the Absolute in the form of sound.

When Kundalini is awakened through the Guru's grace, She awards a prize to the *yogī* by ascending to the *sahasrāra* in the crown of the head and giving rise to ten different kinds of sounds. As a result of the Guru's gracious glance, the Goddess Kundalini, the Divine Mother, manifests in the form of these sounds. The *mātṛkāśakti*, which consists of all the letters of the alphabet, is said to be of the form of *nāda*. This is the divine sound, the music of the celestial beings. By releasing the nectar of inner love, it keeps a *yogī* in supreme bliss. This music is sublime. Compared with it, outer music is merely child's play.

As a *kuṇḍalinī yogī* listens to the ten different sounds, he automatically recognizes the Absolute in the form of sound through the spontaneous practices of centring, meditation, and *samādhi*. A *yogī* who pursues the divine sound understands fully the nature of the Absolute in the form of sound and the place where the sound arises. He also understands the power of words and all the supernatural powers that arise from the groups of letters. *Nāda* issues from every pore of a *yogī's* body. If one wants to know why the great Siddhas chant, then one should understand these divine sounds through the practice of *nādānusandhāna*, the contemplation of the inner sound. Then one will know that *nāda* is God in manifest form. It is elixir. *Nāda* and chanting are nectarean.

A *yogī* also understands that from the Absolute in the form of sound, all four levels of speech — *parā, paśyantī, madhyamā* and *vaikharī* — unfold. The principle of divine sounds unfolds from *parā* and *paśyantī* successively and proceeds to *madhyamā*. When hearing turns inward through *yoga* and meditation, the divine sound is perceived. As a *yogī* turns within more and more, he

hears the increasingly subtle levels of *nadā*. He fully understands the nature of the Absolute in the form of sound. When a seeker recognizes His nature, he effortlessly attains Parabrahman. When a *yogī* one-pointedly focuses his mind on the unstruck sound that resonates continuously, the true nature of the supreme space, which is Consciousness and luminosity, is revealed to him.

406. यथा तथा यत्र तत्र द्वादशान्ते मनः क्षिपेत्।
प्रतिक्षणं क्षीणवृत्तेर्वैलक्षण्यं दिनैर्भवेत् ॥[126]

If a person fixes his mind on any one of the three *dvādaśāntas* again and again, the fluctuation of his mind will diminish, and in a few days he will attain the state of Bhairava.

A *yogī* should take his consciousness, which arises spontaneously, through any one of the previously mentioned locations (the navel, the forehead and so on) to the *dvādaśānta* and try to focus his mind there. When he does this, the fluctuations of the mind diminish, its fickleness subsides, and at the right moment he experiences within himself the manifestation of the unique and extraordinary nature of Supreme Bhairava. Focusing the mind on the *dvādaśānta* is a great and sublime practice, which I have explained in the book *I Am That*. It is often the case that when a person becomes upset he lowers his head towards his heart and quietly breathes in and out. He finds a kind of stillness there. If he systematically practises focusing on the *dvādaśānta*, then the attainment of supreme bliss is not far away. In fact he will experience bliss immediately. This is one of the greatest and highest practices. It is the practice of the Siddhas.

126. *Vijñānabhairava*, 51.

God is *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*. Shaivism says that these are the form of Shiva. When a seeker meditates on this form of Shiva, he has the exalted experience of the Self. *Prakāśa*, illumination, arises in this experience.

> ध्यातृध्याने परित्यज्य क्रमाद्ध्येयैकगोचरम् ।
> निवातदीपवच्चित्तं समाधिरभिधीयते ॥[127]
>
> When a person's practice becomes ripe, he gives up the idea of meditator as well as meditation. Then the mind makes the goal of meditation its subject and becomes still, like a flame where there is no wind.

This state of mind is called *samādhi*. The goal of meditation (*dhyeya*) is of the form of *prakāśa* and *vimarśa* and is the inner Witness. The thought-free state is called *samādhi*. The attainment of equality alone is the highest *samādhi*.

लोकानन्दः समाधिसुखम् ।[128] – "The delight that the *yogī* feels in abiding in his nature as the Knower with respect to both the subject and the object in the world is his delight of *samādhi*." The *Śivasūtras* say that if one has the awareness of the Self in all people, the idea of duality disappears and the state of unity that follows is the bliss of *samādhi*. Equanimity, stillness, one-pointedness, and the absence of thoughts and cares are all signs of the state of *samādhi*.

From the standpoint of the Truth, the entire world is the embodiment of Shiva.

> सर्वं देहं चिन्मयं हि जगद्वा परिभावयेत् ।
> युगपन्निर्विकल्पेन मनसा परमोदयः ॥

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127. *Pañcadaśī*, 1.55.
128. *Śivasūtras*, 1.18.

> When, with a one-pointed and thought-free mind, a seeker contemplates his whole body or the entire universe all at once as being of the nature of Consciousness, he experiences the supreme awakening.[129]

One should contemplate simultaneously every limb of the body from head to toe or the entire universe as the embodiment of Consciousness. In this kind of contemplation, when the mind becomes free of thoughts, the miracle of the mind's true nature is revealed within and without. Only light and nothing but light remains.

Saint Tukaram Maharaj said that when the lotion of Consciousness was applied to his eyes, his vision became divine. He added that in fact the world has never existed as the world. Only Parabrahman exists. Tukaram realized Brahman in the form of *om* or *so 'ham*.

The illumined object, the body and the world are not different from *prakāśa*, or light, which is the nature of the Supreme Principle. According to this theory, when the mind is free of thoughts and when all objects are transformed into light, the state of *paramodaya*, or supreme awakening, is revealed to a *yogī*.

मनसः परमा गतिः। – "The *yogī's* mind moves towards the Supreme." The *Śivasūtras* say, शुद्धतत्त्वसन्धानाद्वापशुशक्तिः।[130] – "By constant awareness of the pure Principle, he becomes like one in whom the binding power that exists in the limited self is absent." The pure and perfect Principle is Paramashiva. He embodies the universe. By the practice of this awareness, the power of bondage is destroyed in a seeker. This is explained in the commentary on the *Spandakārikās*

129. *Vijñānabhairava*, 63.

130. *Śivasūtras*, 1.16.

as follows:

> इति वा यस्य संवित्तिः क्रीडात्वेनाखिलं जगत् ।
> स पश्यन्सततं युक्तो जीवन्मुक्तो न संशयः ॥[131]
>
> The entire world is the play of the Universal Consciousness. One who sees it in this way becomes liberated while in the body.

He becomes Shiva. The world and human beings are composed of feeling. Through one's feeling, one can become anything.

> सर्वं जगत्स्वदेहं वा स्वानन्दभरितं स्मरेत् ।
> युगपत्स्वामृतेनैव परानन्दमयो भवेत् ॥[132]
>
> The *yogī* should contemplate the entire universe or his own body all at once in its totality as being filled with his essential bliss. Then, through his own ambrosia-like bliss, he will become identified with the supreme bliss.

A person should feel himself to be full of the spontaneous inner bliss, which is different from the bliss experienced through objects outside the body in the world. This is a great centring technique; it is meditation as well as knowledge. One should never forget what Bahinabai said: "God and the world both exist according to one's feeling." The feeling of pure *vimarśa*, pure self-awareness, is the inner God. As a *yogī* practises this awareness, he enters spontaneously into the natural state of bliss, which is like nectar and is described in the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*:

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131. Vasugupta, *Spandakārikās*, 2.5.
132. *Vijñānabhairava*, 65.

आनन्दाद्ध्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते
आनन्देन जातानि जीवन्ति।[133]

All individuals and beings, all things, whether sentient or insentient, matter or consciousness, arise from the blissful Supreme Principle.

Everything is born from the bliss of Consciousness, lives its life and finally merges into the same Consciousness during the deluge. When a *yogī* attains the state of bliss he becomes fulfilled and supremely blessed. Muktananda says, "In reality, the entire world is the play of bliss. The appearance of the world depends on a person's vision. A person creates everything according to his feelings; he creates his own reality. What is day for a crow is night for an owl; what is day for an owl is night for a crow. Our own muddy vision creates our world. For God, only His world of bliss exists. If you practise God's viewpoint and attain your blissful inner sight, then no matter where you go there will be nothing but bliss and joy. The entire universe of men, women, creepers, trees, flowers, gardens and the strumming of music surges with waves of bliss. Change your vision. You need do nothing else – the world of pain or pleasure is simply your own vision. Just turn within. Go deeper and deeper to where the state of perfect bliss and extraordinary ecstasy awaits you. When you reach that state, you will become it. You will know 'I am That.'"

410. वायुद्वयस्य सङ्घट्टादन्तर्वा बहिरन्ततः।
योगी समत्वविज्ञानसमुद्गमनभाजनम्।[134]

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133. *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, 3.6.1.

134. *Vijñānabhairava*, 64.

> By the fusion of the *prāṇa* and *apāna* [the *prāṇa* rising inwardly in the inner *dvādaśānta*, or heart, the *apāna* rising externally in the outer *dvādaśānta*], there finally arises a condition in which both *prāṇa* and *apāna* cease completely, whether in the inner or outer heart. By meditating on that condition of emptiness in which there is no awareness of either *prāṇa* or *apāna*, the *yogī* becomes so worthy that the intuitive experience of equality arises in him.

There is no *sādhanā* that can be compared with that of the *dvādaśānta*. All Siddhas have attained God in the *dvādaśānta* through *so 'ham*. When a *yogī* has this equal vision, he understands the state of equality in which the dual state of *prāṇa* and *apāna* merges into the mysterious space, within or without. Along with that, in the same way he dissolves all worldly objects into the mysterious Supreme Principle. Now he sees everything as inseparable from himself. By having this expanded vision of equality, he attains the supreme state.

411. समता सर्वदेवानामावल्लीमन्त्रवर्णयोः।
आगमानां गतीनां च सर्वं शिवमयं यतः।[135]

> The *yogī* who has attained the state of equality sees God alone in all deities, creepers, *mantras*, letters, revealed scriptural texts, actions and phases.

समता सर्वभावानां वृत्तीनां चैव सर्वशः।
समता सर्वदृष्टीनां द्रव्याणां चैव सर्वशः॥
भूमिकानां च सर्वासामावल्लीनां तथैव च।
समता सर्वदेवानां वर्णानां चैव सर्वशः॥

> To see as equal all feelings, mental modifications, points of view, wealth, places, creepers, goddesses and letters is called the vision of equality.

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135. *Mahārthamañjarī.*

Abhinavagupta's *Tantraloka* has made it clear that everything is Shiva. For this reason, it is very natural for the vision of equality to arise through the practice of this awareness. When everything is in fact Shiva, is it so difficult to see everything as Shiva? We should change our customary outlook. Then we will become happy.

412. अहं ममेदमित्यादि प्रतिपत्तिप्रसङ्गतः।
निरोधारे मनो याति तद्ध्यानप्रेरणाच्छमी।।[136]

Even when a person says, "I am", "This is mine" and so on, his thought goes to that absolute "I" that does not depend on any support. When he contemplates That he attains lasting peace.

"This is me; this is mine" – the knowledge of this limited I-consciousness is actually not different from the knowledge of the perfect I-consciousness experienced by a wise person. Ultimately the mind goes to that independent Principle because all knowledge of I-consciousness is woven together equally there. The essential nature of the Self is supreme bliss. It can never be divided. The knowledge of the perfect I-consciousness is this supreme bliss of God's essential nature. That perfect I-consciousness exists everywhere. Whether one is enlightened or ignorant, the Self of all is the same. Everyone loves his own Self. The love a person feels for his own Self can be considered to be worship of God.

Muktananda says, "In the scriptures, love is considered to be God. Love is within all. Whoever loves his Self loves God. That is worship, *yoga* and meditation. Moreover, love of the Self is also love of the world as well as worship of all religions." Jagadguru Shankaracharya said, आत्मा त्वं ... पूजा ते विषयोपभोगरचना

136. *Vijñānabhairava*, 131.

– "O Lord, You are the Self of all. All the pleasures of my senses are objects for Your worship." What beautiful understanding! What a Shaivite teaching! Through knowledge one can transform oneself. Becoming blissful, one can live on this earth in great ecstasy.

The knowledge of one's own Self cannot be considered to be either obscured or revealed since it does not depend on any concepts such as limitation or perfection. Whether a person is ignorant or enlightened, his true nature is bliss. The Self dwells as the embodiment of bliss and love in the hearts of both the ignorant and the enlightened. Therefore Maheshwarananda said that whether an individual has fallen into ignorance or is liberated, because of his essentially blissful nature he can never be separated from the supreme love of his own Self. As it is explained in a verse of the *Mahārthamañjarī*:

> नन्वात्मनः प्रियार्थं सर्वस्य प्रियत्वं भणति श्रुतिः।
> तस्मादानन्दस्वभाव आत्मा मुक्तो ऽप्यमुक्तो वा॥
>
> Whether one is liberated or bound, one's essential nature, the Self, is always blissful.

Bliss exists in the form of the Self. The *śrutis* say, आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति।– "Man loves all in order to fulfil his own desires." Everyone wants to remain in a state of happiness; everyone wants to continue to exist. In this, a person's love for his own Self can be seen. There is no love greater than love for the Self. Because the nature of the Self is nothing but supreme bliss, one always thinks about bliss. Bhatta Utpaladeva says in the *Stotrāvali*:

> त्वमेवात्मेश सर्वस्य सर्वश्चात्मनि रागवान्।
> इति स्वभावसिद्धं त्वद्भक्तिं जानन् जयेज्जनः।

> O independent Lord! You are the Self of all people. Everyone loves his own Self. A devotee who has an outlook of unity understands this devotion to You, which arises naturally, and he conquers the world.

All useful actions that are performed for the sake of the Self are devotion to one's own Self. If one regards everything from the right point of view, no one is ignorant, learned or enlightened. Only the independent God appears in all forms; God alone exists in such concepts as ignorance, learning and enlightenment. One should become free of all thoughts and serenely contemplate the essential nature of one's own Self. There are not really different objects in this world. By freeing the mind of thoughts, one should meditate on one's own Self. In meditation the mind becomes still. When this happens a seeker acquires a certain strength, and all his conflicts vanish. He attains Shiva, the supreme *nirvāṇa*. शिवतुल्यो जायते। – "He becomes like Shiva."

413. न मे बन्धो न मोक्षो मे भीतस्यैता विभीषिकाः।
प्रतिबिम्बमिदं बुद्धेर्जलेष्विव विवस्वतः॥[137]

> There is neither bondage nor liberation for me. Bondage and liberation frighten only those who are ignorant of their essential nature. The universe appears as a reflection in the intellect like the image of the sun in water.

Such a *yogī* knows, "My nature is the embodiment of Consciousness. Since it is not divided by space, time and so on, I have not fallen into any bondage. I am the Self, which is pure Consciousness. I do not have to free my Self from any bondage." Bondage and liberation

137. *Vijñānabhairava*, 135.

exist only when there is division. The ideas of bondage, liberation and so on, apply only to a person who, because of *māyā*, does not understand his true nature and is afraid. He who wastes his life eating, drinking, playing, and watching movies and plays knows fear. He who is full of fear, misery, jealousy, enmity and false pride experiences fear until death. He finds fearlessness and peace only when he is on the funeral pyre. The scriptures say, द्वितीयाद्वै भयं भवति।– "When there is the notion of duality, there is fear." One who sees differences between the all-pervasive God, the world and the Self spends his whole life in fear. A person who lacks knowledge eats fear throughout his life.

For a person who is terrified by duality, the ideas of bondage and liberation are like a scarecrow, a straw man that he takes to be real. For a *yogī* who understands that the totality of Consciousness and unity is the supreme goal, there is neither bondage nor liberation. He never thinks like this: "By perceiving people as other than himself, a person falls into bondage. He should avoid this and do what will liberate him instead. For this reason, he should certainly practise religious austerities." This type of discussion is mere imagination from the standpoint of the Truth. It is said, निस्त्रैगुण्ये पथि विचरतां को विधिः को निषेधः।– "For a *yogī* who moves along the path that is beyond the three qualities, what dos and don'ts are necessary?" This means that such knowers of the Truth rise above precepts and prohibitions.

The fear of bondage and liberation cannot frighten an enlightened being. He realizes that just as the sun is seen reflected in water, the limited intellect is transformed into the notions "I am bound; I am liberated." From the intellect spring such notions as "What will happen to me? What will go wrong?" The conscious Self is

beyond these. Therefore a seeker should discard the limited intellect, which is full of such fearful ideas. Only then can he become established in his own natural state, the state of the Self. In reality, for an enlightened being the seer, the seen, all activities and all actions are know-ledge. For him there is neither virtue nor sin. A devotee says, "The One who pervades the universe makes me speak and act." The Lord says:

प्रकाशमानं न पृथक्प्रकाशात्
स च प्रकाशो न पृथक्विमर्शात्।
नान्यो विमर्शो ऽहमिति स्वरूपाद्
अहंविमर्शो ऽस्मि चिदेकरूपः॥

The illumined object is not different from *prakāśa*, illumination, and *prakāśa* is never different from *vimarśa*, the awareness of that that is illumined. This *vimarśa* is also not different from "I am", the essential nature of the Self. Therefore I am that Principle, which is the conscious Self in the form of *vimarśa*.

This means that the knowledge of *prakāśa* is not different from the Self. That that is known is revealed through words and is not different from the means of knowing. Through the understanding of the oneness of that that is known and the means of knowing, a seeker becomes established in his own Self.

37

The Abode of the Self

414. In reality, out of its own happiness and out of love for its own blissful play, the one Truth has taken the form of the world. It creates the world, it is the world, yet it is different from the world. Even though it becomes everything and does everything, it still remains separate from everything. It embodies supreme wisdom. Why seek it? It is everything. Why look for it from house to house? It is everywhere. It flows as water. It sings as it blows in the wind. Becoming the earth, it supports everything. Becoming fire, it gives heat to everyone. It digests the food that we eat. It is the ether that fills the whole creation with space. Becoming the sun, it gives life to all plants. It is the stars. It is also men, women, boys and girls, and it is Bhairava, Shri Gurudev. By becoming all these things, it adorns the entire creation. At one place it takes birth and at another place it dies.

Vijnana Bodha Bhairava says, "I am everything. Whatever exists is Me. Whatever does not exist is also Me." If you want to understand this, learn it from

these few words. There is no ignorance in you; there is no bondage, no sin, no anguish in you. Look within. There is Shiva, only Shiva. That alone is *vimarśa*, and that alone is *prakāśa*. O friends! That is Ram, Rahim, Shiva, God. There is nothing different from That.

The seer is reflected in the seen. Remember this. Experience within the wisdom of Bhairava, Shri Gurudev. It is only *prakāśa*, the wisdom of Bhairava, which illumines everything from within, whether it is the mind, the intellect, the subconscious mind or the ego. It is Shiva in the form of *vimarśa* who surveys from within everything that is illumined by *prakāśa*, and knows all thoughts. Shiva is the entire cosmos in the form of *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*. Give up all involvements and entanglements. Stay where you are – all places belong to Shiva. In your own place, know your own Self as your Self. The independent "I" that exists within you is Shiva, the perfect "I". By strengthening this awareness, lose yourself in That. Lose yourself. To lose yourself is to find yourself. To seek yourself is to lose yourself. Understand this once and for all. There is no Shiva without you. Without Shiva, there is no you. This is the teaching of the experienced Siddhas. This is the abode of the Self. Here you can rest. This is where the saints dwell.

Ishwara Iyer was a great *yogī* who had practised austerities; he was an enlightened Siddha Guru who had received the highest blessings through the compassion of the Sun God, the illuminer of all three worlds. The one who loved him above all was Nityananda. Bhagawan Nityananda was a born Siddha and a supreme *avadhūta*, perfect within himself. He was always engaged in his own duty of selfless service to humanity.

Swami Muktananda, who has received the gift of a small measure of his final grace, is the author of this work, which is Shaivism, the knowledge of the Self and the essence of all scriptures. What is perfect now ends with perfection.

Swami Muktananda Paramahamsa
Monday, 7 July 1980

GLOSSARY

Abhasa [*ābhāsa*]: (lit. shining forth) The emanation of the universe out of the Supreme Being.

Abhasavada [*ābhāsavāda*]: Theory of manifestation. The basic theory of Kashmir Shaivism. It explains the absolute freedom and autonomy of the Lord to manifest externally the world of names and forms, which always exists within Him. Accordingly, the world is the effect and Shiva is the cause.

Abheda upaya [*abhedopāya*]: *See* Shambhava upaya.

Abhinavagupta (993-1015): Philosopher and sage of Kashmir Shaivism. Of the lineage of Vasugupta and Somananda, he is the author of *Tantraloka* and *Īśvara Pratyabhijñā Vimarśinī*.

Adhva [*adhvā*]: (lit. course or path) According to Kashmir Shaivism, the whole universe in both its subjective and objective aspects is a proliferation of Shakti or *parāvāk* (subtle sound) in six forms known as the *ṣaḍadhvās* - the six routes or courses. They are, on the subjective side, *varṇa*, *mantra* and *pada* and, on the objective side, *kalā*, *tattva* and *bhuvana*. For more details, see Sir John Woodroffe, *The Garland of Letters* (Madras: Ganesh & Co., 1974).

Agama Shastras [*āgamaśāstra*]: (lit. scriptures that have come from tradition) Shaiva [or Shaivite] scriptures dealing primarily with sacred rituals, and recorded between the 4th-6th centuries; traditionally passed from master to student.

Aham [*aham*]: (lit. "I") I-awareness, I-consciousness; the pure inner Self; the experiencing subject.

Aham vimarsha [*ahaṃ vimarśa*]: Pure I-consciousness.

Anahata nada [*anāhatanāda*]: The inner divine melody; the "unstruck" sound heard in meditation. *See also* Nada.

Ananda shakti [*ānandaśakti*]: The power of absolute bliss.

Anava mala [*āṇavamala*]: One of the impurities or limitations that brings about bondage of the universal Self and reduces it to a limited, individual being; the individual's innate ignorance of his true nature.

Anava upaya [*āṇavopāya*]: In Kashmir Shaivism, a means to Self-realization whereby the seeker uses his body, senses, *prāṇa* (breath), sound, etc.; also known as *bhedopāya* or *kriyopāya*.

Anupaya [*anupāya*]: In Kashmir Shaivism, the path of "no means" to Self-realization; the subtlest means of Self-recognition, in which very little effort is made; also called *pratyabhijñopāya*, since it consists of instant recognition of the true nature of the Self through Guru's grace.

Anusandhana [*anusandhāna*]: Contemplation.

Ashram [*āśrama*]: (lit. without fatigue) The abode of a Guru or saint; a monastic place of retreat where seekers engage in spiritual practices and study the sacred teachings of *yoga*.

Asti [*asti*]: (lit. exists) Existence.

Atma-bala-sparsha [*ātmabalasparśa*]: Inspiration coming from contact with the strength of the Self.

Avadhut [*avadhūta*]: An enlightened being who lives in a state beyond body-consciousness and whose behaviour is not bound by ordinary social conventions.

Bandha [*bandha*]: (lit. lock) A *haṭhayoga* position that temporarily "locks" a specific area of the body to retain the *prāṇa* or life force. The practice of *bandhas* gives great strength to the body. In *jālandharabandha* the chin rests against the collarbones above the breastbone; in *uḍḍīyānabandha* the stomach muscles are drawn inward; and in *mūlabandha* the anal sphincter muscle is contracted and drawn upward.

Bhagawan [*bhagavān*]: (lit. the Lord) One endowed with the six attributes or powers of infinity: spiritual power, righteousness, glory, splendour, knowledge and renunciation. A term of great honour. Swami Muktananda's guru is known as Bhagawan Nityananda.

Bhairava: A name of Shiva meaning the Lord who is responsible for the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe.

Bhairavi: The Shakti of Bhairava.

Bhava [*bhāva*]: (lit. becoming, being) Feeling; attitude.

Bhedabheda [*bhedābheda*]: Unity in multiplicity.

Bhedabheda Advaitins: Followers of one of the sub-schools of Vedanta.

Bheda upaya [*bhedopāya*]: *See* Anava upaya.

Bhogya, Bhojya [*bhogya, bhojya*]: The enjoyed object; object of experience.

Bhokta [*bhoktā*]: Enjoyer; subject; experiencer.

Bhuta-jaya [*bhūtajaya*]: Control over the elements.

Bhuta-kaivalya [*bhūtakaivalya*]: Withdrawal of the mind from the elements.

Bhuta-prithaktva [*bhūtapṛthaktva*]: Separation from the elements.

Bhuvana adhva [*bhuvanādhvā*]: *See* Adhva.

Bimba pratibimba [*bimbapratibimba*]: Original object and its reflection.

Bindu [*bindu*]: (lit. a dot, a point) The compact mass of *śakti* gathered into an undifferentiated point, ready to manifest as the universe; a form made of light (Blue Pearl); the material cause and substance of creation.

Brahma [*brahmā*]: The Absolute Reality manifesting as the active creator of the universe, who is personified as one of the three gods of the Hindu trinity. The other two are Vishnu, who represents the principle of sustenance, and Shiva, who represents the principle of destruction.

Brahmadvaitins [*brahmādvaitavādin*]: Followers of the *Vedas* who consider non-being (*abhāva*) to be the fundamental principle. Their belief is based on the Upanishadic dictum that "all this was originally non-being". They accept the Void as the Ultimate Reality.

Brahman [*brahman*]: The Absolute Reality or all-pervasive Supreme Principle of the universe. The nature of Brahman is described in the *Upaniṣads* and in Vedantic philosophy as *sat* (Existence absolute), *cit* (Consciousness absolute), and *ānanda* (Bliss absolute).

Brahmarandhra [*brahmarandhra*]: The subtle energy centre in the crown of the head at the fontanelle, the upper end of the *suṣumnānāḍī*. When the *prāna* reaches the *brahmarandhra*, one experiences the state of total freedom.

Buddhi [*buddhi*]: The ascertaining intelligence and the impersonal or superpersonal state of consciousness of a limited individual.

Chaitanya [*caitanya*]: The fundamental Consciousness, which has absolute freedom of knowing (*jñānaśakti*) and doing (*kriyāśakti*).

Chakra [*cakra*]: (lit. wheel) In the human body there are seven major energy centres or nerve plexes called *cakras*. When Kundalini is awakened, this vital force ascends and purifies the *cakras*.

Chiti [*citi*]: *See* Chiti Shakti.

Chiti Shakti or Chitshakti [*citiśakti, citśakti*]: The dynamic power of the Absolute, which manifests the world process; the power of Self-revelation by which the Supreme shines by itself.

Chitta [*citta*]: In Kashmir Shaivism, the limitation of the Universal Consciousness manifested in the individual mind; the mind of the empirical individual. In *rajayoga*, *citta* means mind, and in Vedanta it refers to the subconscious.

Darshan [*darśana*]: (1) Seeing, or being in the presence of God, an image of God, or a holy being. (2) The main philosophical schools of India are known as *darśanas*.

Dhyana [*dhyāna*]: Meditation.

Dvadashanta [*dvādaśānta*]: (lit. a distance of twelve fingers) Specific points where, according to the Shaiva tradition, the breath merges with Supreme Consciousness. These points are said to be twelve finger widths from the nostrils, along the arc the breath takes, both inside and outside the body.

Eight supernatural powers [*siddhis*]: Powers attained through *mantra* repetition, meditation, and other yogic practices. They are *aṇimā*, the ability to reduce one's body to the size of an atom (used to travel in subtle realms); *mahimā*, the ability to expand the body to any size; *laghimā*, the ability to make the body light (levitation); *garimā*, the ability to make the body heavy; *prāpti*, the ability to attain everything; *prakāmya*, the ability to have one's wishes fulfilled; *īśatva*, the ability to gain lordship over everything; and *vaśitva*, the power to attract and control all things.

Eknath Maharaj: (1528-1609) A householder poet-saint of Maharashtra. The author of several hundred *abhaṅgas* or devotional poems, he was expelled from the Brahmin caste because of his attempts to banish untouchability. By writing of religious subjects in the vernacular, Eknath ushered in a spiritual revival among the people.

Grahaka [*grāhaka*]: The perceiver; experiencer.

Grahya [*grāhya*]: The objects of experience.

Guru [*guru*]: A spiritual Master who has attained oneness with God and who initiates disciples and devotees into the spiritual path and guides them to liberation.

Iccha shakti [*icchāśakti*]: The power of will of Paramashiva.

Iccha upaya [*icchopāya*]: *See* Shambhava upaya.

Idam [*idam*]: (lit. this) A technical word used in philosophy to denote the totality of the universe as well as any object of perception, gross or subtle.

Ishwara Pratyabhijna Karika [*īsvarapratyabhijñākārikā*]: One of the important works of Kashmir Shaivism; written by Utpalacharya, pupil of Somananda, who combined the teachings of his master with philosophical reasoning.

Japa [*japa*]: (lit. prayer uttered in a low voice) Repetition of a *mantra*, either silently or aloud. *See also* Mantra.

Jnana shakti [*jñānaśakti*]: The power of knowledge; the power of maintaining all objects in conscious relationship with oneself and with one another.

Jnana upaya [*jñānopāya*]: *See* Shakta upaya

Jnaneshwar Maharaj: (1275-1296) Foremost among the saints of Maharashtra, and a child *yogī* of extraordinary powers. He was born into a family of saints, and his older brother, Nivrittinath, was his Guru. His verse commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Jñāneśvari*, written in Marathi, is acknowledged as one of the world's most important spiritual works. He took live *samādhi* at the age of 21 in Alandi, where his Samadhi Shrine continues to attract thousands of seekers.

Kabir: (1440-1518) A great poet-saint who lived his life as a weaver in Varanasi. His followers included Hindus and Muslims, and his influence was a powerful force in overcoming the fierce religious factionalism of the day. Bracing and penetrating, ecstatic and sobering, his poems describe the experience of the Self, the greatness of the Guru, and the nature of true spirituality. They are still being studied and sung all over the world.

Kala adhva [*kalādhvā*]: *See* Adhva.

Kanda [*kāṇḍa*]: An egg-shaped, bulbous nerve plexus near the base of the spine.

Karana [*karaṇa*]: (lit. instrument) (1) The principles that concern perception and action; the inner and outer instruments (sense

organs). (2) One of the practices in the *āṇavopāya*, in which the aspirant contemplates the body and the nervous system as a replica of the cosmos.

Karma [*karma*]: Action; accumulation of past actions.

Karma mala [*kārmamala*]: One of the three impurities; limitation to a finite power of the universal power of action; impurity caused by the impressions left in the mind by one's *karma*, or motivated action.

Khechari [*khecarī*]: A sub-species of *vāmeśvarīśakti*; one that moves in the *kha*, or space of Consciousness; also the name of a *haṭhayoga* technique.

Kriya [*kriyā*]: A gross (physical) or subtle (mental, emotional) purificatory movement initiated by the awakened Kundalini. *Kriyās* purify the body and nervous system so as to allow a seeker to endure the energy of higher states of consciousness.

Kriya shakti [*kriyāśakti*]: The power of action; the power of Paramashiva to assume any and every form.

Kundalini [*kuṇḍalinī*]: (lit. coiled one) The supreme power, primordial Shakti, or energy that lies coiled at the base of the spine in the *mūlādhāracakra* of every human being. Through the descent of grace (*śaktipāta*) this extremely subtle force, also described as a goddess, is awakened and begins to purify the whole system and the cycle of birth and death comes to an end. As She travels through the central channel (*suṣumnānāḍī*) She pierces the various subtle energy centres until She finally reaches the *sahasrāra* at the crown of the head. There the individual self merges into the Supreme Self in the marriage of Shiva and Shakti, and the cycle of birth and death comes to an end. Kundalini is described, in the sacred texts that praise Her, as constantly watching for an opportunity to bestow Her grace on the Seeker. *See also* Chakra, Shaktipat.

Levels of speech: *See* Speech, levels of.

Madhya [*madhya*]: (lit. central) (1) The pure I-consciousness; (2) the *suṣumnānāḍī*; also called *madhyadhāma*, the central abode.

Madhyama [*madhyamā*]: Sound in its subtle form as it exists in the mind before its gross manifestation.

Madhyamikas: Followers of the Madhyamaka school of Buddhism, which teaches that Reality lies in the middle (*madhyamā*) and not in any of the extremes. According to them, the world is unreal

or void (*śūnya*), and all mental and non-mental phenomena are illusory. They are also called nihilists or Shunyavadins.

Mala [*mala*]: (lit. stain or impurity) The term in Shaivite philosophy that describes how the individual's experience of pure consciousness is limited by identification with smallness (*āṇavamala*), separateness (*māyīyamala*) and sense of doership (*kārmamala*).

Manasa Lake: A sacred lake near Mount Kailasa in Tibet where swans are said to migrate during the monsoon.

Mantra [*mantra*]: (lit. sacred invocation; that which protects) The names of God; sacred words or divine sounds invested with the power to protect, purify and transform the individual who repeats them.

Mantra adhva [*mantrādhvā*]: *See* Adhva.

Mantra virya [*mantravīrya*]: The perfect I-consciousness, which is the fountainhead of all the powers or potencies behind the *mantra*; Shiva-consciousness; the experience of *parāvāk* (sound in its seed form).

Matrika [*mātṛkā*]: Letter or sound syllable, the basis of all words and hence of all knowledge; Shakti in sound form that manifests the universe. Because it is the source of words, *mātṛkā* is said to be the source of ignorance (which comes about mainly through the ideas produced by words).

Matrika chakra [*mātṛkācakra*]: The Supreme Consciousness at the subtlest level of sound (*parāvāk*), consisting of the *mantra* of pure I-consciousness (*aham*). This *mantra* contains all powers of sound (*mātṛkās*) that bring into manifestation the world of diversity. *See also* Matrika.

Matrika shakti [*mātṛkāśakti*]: The power of sound; a form of the Universal Consciousness.

Maya [*māyā*]: (lit. to measure) The force that shows the unreal as real and presents that that is temporary and short-lived as eternal and everlasting. In the Advaita Vedanta of Shankaracharya, it is described as the beginningless cause that brings about the illusion of the world; an indescribable power of Brahman that is neither real nor totally unreal. *See also* Maya shakti and Maya tattva.

Maya pramata [*māyāpramātā*]: The individual bound soul governed by *māyā*.

Maya shakti [*māyāśakti*]: The Shakti of Shiva who creates differentiation in the mind of the bound soul and gives rise to *māyātattva*;

the limiting power of the Infinite; also called *mahāmāyā*. *See also* Maya tattva.

Maya tattva [*māyātattva*]: The principle that throws a veil over pure Consciousness; material cause of physical manifestation; source of the five *kañcukas*, or limitations. *See* Maya shakti.

Mayiya mala [*māyīyamala*]: The limitation caused by *māyā* that gives rise to the individual soul, along with its gross and subtle bodies, and brings about a sense of differentiation.

Mudra [*mudrā*]: (1) *Mud* (joy), *ra* (to give); called *mudrā* because it gives the bliss of the Self. (2) That which seals up (*mudranāt*) the universe into the being of transcendental Consciousness. (3) *Haṭhayoga* posture and manipulation of different organs of the body as an aid in concentration. (4) Symbolic signs made with the fingers in worship, often spontaneously, and in classical dance.

Mudra virya [*mudrāvīrya*]: The power by which one experiences the emergence of the supreme I-consciousness; also called *mantravīrya* or *khecarī* state.

Muladhara [*mūlādhāra*]: The first *cakra*, or lowest of the seven major energy centres in the subtle body, situated at the base of the spine where consciousness deals mainly with survival. Here Kundalini lies coiled three and a half times, dormant until awakened by grace. *See* Chakra; Kundalini; Shaktipat.

Nada [*nāda*]: (1) Metaphysically, the first movement of Shiva-Shakti towards manifestation. (2) In *yoga*, the unstruck sound experienced in meditation.

Nadanusandhana [*nādānusandhāna*]: A practice in which one listens to the inner divine melodies.

Nadi [*nāḍī*]: (lit. duct, nerve) A channel in the subtle body through which the vital force flows. A network of 720 million *nāḍīs* spreads throughout the human body. The three main *nāḍīs* are the central channel or *suṣumnā*, which is flanked by the *īḍā* and *piṅgalā nāḍīs*, known as the channels of the moon and the sun. The hubs or junctions of the *nāḍīs* are known as *cakras*. *See also* Chakra; Kundalini.

Nadi samhara [*nāḍī saṃhāra*]: Dissolution of the inbreath (*prāṇa*) and the outbreath (*apāna*) into the central channel of the subtle body (*suṣumnā*).

Namdev: (1270-1350) A poet-saint of Pandharpur and friend of Jnaneshwar Maharaj. He realized the all-pervasive nature of God after meeting his Guru, Vishoba Khechar, and thereafter com-

posed ecstatic *abhaṅgas*, or devotional poems, to Vitthal, a form of Lord Krishna.

Narada: A divine *ṛṣi*, or seer; a great devotee and servant of Vishnu. He appears in many of the *Purāṇas* and is the author of the *Nāradabhaktisūtras*, the authoritative text on *bhaktiyoga*.

Nirnaya [*nirṇaya*]: (lit. establishing) Confirmation.

Nirvikalpa samadhi [*nirvikalpasamādhi*]: Superconscious thought-free state.

Nirvisheshadvaitins [*nirviśeṣādvaitavādin*]: Followers of one of the sub-schools of non-dualism.

Nishkala [*niṣkalā*]: The transcendental Principle beyond all manifestation and limitation.

Niyamana [*niyamana*]: (lit. checking) Restraining; subduing; binding.

Nyaya [*nyāya*]: One of the six main philosophies of Hinduism; primarily a system of logic.

Om Namah Shivaya [*oṃ namaḥ śivāya*]: The *mantra* of the Siddha lineage, which means "Salutations to Shiva." Shiva denotes the inner Self. It is known as the great redeeming *mantra*, for it has the power to grant worldly fulfilment as well as spiritual realization.

Pancha kanchukas [*pañca kāñcukās*]: (lit. five cloaks) The limitations or coverings of the individual soul; by-products of *māyā*: they are *kalā*, which brings about limitation of the power to do; *vidyā*, which brings about limitation of the power of know-ledge; *rāga*, which reduces the completeness of the Universal Consciousness and brings about the desire for particular things; *kāla*, which reduces the eternality of Universal Consciousness and brings about limitation of time; and *niyati*, which brings about limitation of cause, space, and form.

Paramarthika [*pāramārthika*]: The Ultimate; the Supreme; spiritual.

Paramashiva [*paramaśiva*]: The Ultimate Reality; the core of all.

Parasamvit [*parāsaṃvit*]: Supreme Consciousness, in which there is complete fusion of *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*; the supreme I-consciousness. *See also* Prakasha and Vimarsha.

Prakasha [*prakāśa*]: (lit. light) The principle of Self-revelation; the principle by which everything is known.

Prakriti [*prakṛti*]: Primordial nature; the basic stuff of the material world. In Kashmir Shaivism, *prakṛti* is identified with Shakti.

Pramana [*pramāṇa*]: Knowledge; means of knowledge; proof.

Pramatri, pramata [*pramātṛ, pramātā*]: Knower; subject; experiencer.

Prameya [*prameya*]: Known; object of knowledge; object.

Pramiti, miti [*pramiti, mitī*]: Right cognition (free of error).

Prana [*prāṇa*]: The vital life-sustaining force of both the body and the universe. To carry out its work, *prāṇa* pervades the body in five forms: *prāṇa*, inhalation, the primary support of the heart; *apāna*, exhalation, the power that works downward to expel waste matter; *samāna*, the power that distributes the nourishment from food to all parts of the body; *vyāna*, the power of movement within the 720 million *nāḍīs*, or nerve channels of the subtle body; and *udāna*, the power that carries energy upward, giving strength and radiance to the body.

Prana shakti [*prānaśakti*]: Life-force; the supreme energy in the form of *prāṇa*.

Pratibha [*pratibhā*]: (1) Ever-creative activity of Consciousness. (2) The power by which we gain or understand knowledge. (3) Parashakti.

Pratibhasika [*prātibhāsika*]: Apparent; illusory.

Pravrittivada [*pravṛttivāda*]: Theory of extroverted life; seeing God while living in the world.

Purnahanta [*pūrṇāhaṃtā*]: The supreme I-consciousness, the non-relational perfect I-consciousness.

Puryashtaka [*puryaṣṭaka*]: (lit. the city of the group of eight) The five *tanmātras* (sound, touch, colour, taste and smell), *buddhi* (intellect), *ahaṅkāra* (ego), and *manas* (mind); another name for the subtle body.

Rasa [*rasa*]: Nectar, flavour; a subtle energy or richness, sweetness and delight.

Sahaja [*sahaja*]: Innate essential nature; natural.

Sahajavidya [*sahajavidyā*]: Knowledge of the innate essential nature; state of pure, divine Consciousness in which mental awareness ceases; pervasion into Shiva-consciousness (*śivavyāpti*).

Sahasrara [*sahasrāra*]: The thousand-petalled *cakra*, or spiritual energy centre, at the crown of the head, where one experiences the highest states of consciousness. It is the seat of Lord Shiva, the supreme Guru. When the Kundalini Shakti unites with Shiva in the *sahasrāra*, the meditator achieves the state of enlightenment, or Self-realization. *See also* Chakra; Kundalini.

Sakala [*sakala*]: All limited individual souls or experiencing subjects.

Samanya [*sāmānya*]: (lit. ordinary) General; common.

Samavesha [*samāveśa*]: Absorption or merging of the individual consciousness into the Universal Consciousness.

Samvit [*saṃvit*]: Universal Consciousness.

Sankarya [*sāṅkarya*]: Mixture.

Savisheshadvaitins [*saviśesādvaitavādin*]: Followers of one of the subschools of Vedanta.

Senses of perception: The five senses of perception, or *jñānendriyas*, are the power of hearing (*śrotra*), the power of feeling by touch (*tvak*), the power of seeing (*cakṣu*), the power of tasting (*jihvā*), and the power of smelling (*ghrāṇa*).

Seven experiencers: Due to the different positions occupied by Consciousness in the process of its manifestation of the universe, its outlook changes at seven different levels. Its technical names at these seven stages are *śivapramatā*, *mantramaheśvara*, *mantreśvara*, *mantra*, *vijñānakalā*, *pralayakalā*, and *sakala*. The universe can be experienced at any of these seven levels.

Seven pentads: This can be interpreted as 7 x 5 = 35 or as 7 + 5. If seven pentads are taken to be thirty-five, they represent the thirty-five *tattvas* from Shiva to the earth. If taken to be 7 + 5, seven represents the seven experiencers and five represents the five *śaktis*: *cit*, *ānanda*, *icchā*, *jñāna*, and *kṛiyā*. Five also refers to the five *kāñcukās*. *See* Seven experiencers and Pancha kanchukas.

Shakta upaya [*śāktopāya*]: In Kashmir Shaivism, a means to Self-realization primarily through the use of the mind. Since mental activity plays a vital role in it, it is also called *jñānopāya*, or the path of knowledge; also called *bhedābheda* (unity in multiplicity) *upāya*.

Shakti (Chiti, Kundalini, Kundalini Shakti) [*śakti, citi, kuṇḍalinī, kuṇḍalinīśakti*]: The divine cosmic power that projects, maintains and dissolves the universe.

Shakti [*śakti*]: Power; force; energy.

Shakti chakra [*śakticakra*]: The group of powers that controls the inner and outer worlds.

Shaktipat [*śaktipāta*]: Transmission of spiritual power (Shakti) from the Guru to the disciple; spiritual awakening by grace.

Shambhava upaya [*śāmbhavopāya*]: In Kashmir Shaivism, a means to

Self-realization meant for advanced aspirants; sudden emergence of Shiva-consciousness by a mere hint from the Guru. Since in this *upāya* the Self is realized through the will, it is also called *icchopāya.*

Shiva [*śiva*]: (1) A name for the all-pervasive Supreme Reality. (2) One of the Hindu trinity; the aspect of God as the destroyer. (3) The personal God of the Shaivites. In his personal form he is portrayed as a *yogī* wearing a tigerskin and holding a trident, with snakes coiled around his neck and arms.

Shiva drishti [*śivadṛṣṭi*]: (1) A text of Kashmir Shaivism by Somananda, written in the 10th century. (2) The state of equipoise and equality consciousness.

Shrimad Bhagavatam [*śrīmad bhāgavatam*]: One of the *Purāṇas*, it consists of ancient legends of the various incarnations of the Lord, including the life and exploits of Lord Krishna, and stories of the sages and their disciples.

Shrutis [*śrutis*]: Sacred revealed scriptures.

Shuddha adhva [*śuddhādhvā*]: *See* Adhva.

Shuddhavidya [*śuddhavidyā*]: (1) Pure knowledge. (2) The *tattva* immediately above the level of material manifestation.

Shunyavadins [*śūnyavādin*]: Followers of one of the sub-schools of Vedanta.

Siddha [*siddha*]: A perfected *yogī*; one who is in the state of unity-consciousness and who has achieved mastery over the senses and their objects; one whose experience of the Supreme Self is uninterrupted and whose identification with the ego has been dissolved.

Siddha Yoga [*siddhayoga*]: The *yoga* that takes place spontaneously within a seeker in whom Kundalini has been awakened by a Siddha Guru, and that leads to the state of spiritual perfection.

Spanda [*spanda*]: Creative pulsation; apparent motion in the motionless Shiva that brings about the manifestation, maintenance and withdrawal of the universe; the independent (*svātantrya*) Shakti.

Speech, levels of: Sound originates in the deepest level of unmanifest Consciousness, the *parā* level. From here, it arises successively through the *paśyantī* level to the *madhyamā* (subtle) level of speech until it manifests on the gross level as *vaikharī*, or arti-culated speech. The four levels of speech correspond to the four bodies—the *vaikharī* to the gross body, *madhyamā* to the subtle body, *paśyantī* to the causal body, and *parā* to the supracausal body.

Sthanakalpana [*sthānakalpanā*]: One of the practices in the *āṇavopāya*, whereby one concentrates on external objects.

Svarupa [*svarūpa*]: One's own or essential nature.

Swami [*svāmī*]: A respectful term of address for a *saṃnyāsīn* or holy being.

Tanmatra(s) [*tanmātra*]: The subtle essences of sound, touch, sight, taste and smell from which the five gross elements are formed.

Tattva [*tattva*]: (lit. that-ness) That that is the essence of each stage of manifestation (*see* footnote 42). According to Kashmir Shaivism, the process of creation contains thirty-six *tattvas*: Shiva, Shakti, Sadashiva, Ishwara, *śuddhavidyā*, *māyātattva*, the five cloaks (*pañca kāñcukās*), *puruṣa* (individual soul), *prakṛti* (primordial nature, the basic stuff of the material universe), *buddhi* (intellect), *ahaṅkāra* (ego), *manas* (mind), the five powers of sense perception, the five powers of action, the five *tanmātras*, or rudimentary elements, and the five gross elements. These comprise creation from Shiva to the earth.

Three worlds: Heaven, hell, and the world of mortals; the states of waking, dream and deep sleep.

Tukaram Maharaj: (1608-1650) A great poet-saint of Maharashtra born at Dehu, who received initiation in a dream. He wrote thousands of *abhaṅgas*, many of which describe his *sādhanā* and spiritual experiences, his initiation, his realization, and the glory of the divine Name.

Tulsidas: (1532-1623) The poet-saint of North India who wrote in Hindi the *Rāmacaritamānasa* or *Tulsī Rāmāyaṇa*, the life story of Lord Rama, still one of the most popular scriptures.

Turiya, turya [*turīyā, turyā*]: (lit. fourth) The fourth state of consciousness beyond the states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep, and pervading all the states; identified with the Self.

Ucchara [*ucchāra*]: In the *āṇavopāya*, a technique of concentration on the *prāṇaśakti*, or vital force. Various aspects of *ānanda* (bliss) are experienced during this concentration.

Unmana, unmani [*unmanā, unmanī*]: (lit. that which transcends *manas*, or mind) The transcendental Shakti of Paramashiva in its primal movement towards manifestation. This Shakti is *amātra*, or measureless and beyond time.

Unmesha [*unmeṣa*]: (lit. opening out) (1) the initial throb of creation;

the flashing forth of the creative impulse of the Divine. (2) A sudden blossoming of Self-awareness that comes in the instant that one has let go of one form and has not yet caught hold of another, as in the space between two breaths or two thoughts.

Upaya [*upāya*]: Means; technique.

Vaisheshika [*vaiśeṣika*]: One of the six major philosophies of Hinduism, which expounds the theory that everything is made of atoms.

Varna [*varṇa*]: (1) A letter of the alphabet. (2) In the *āṇavopāya*, an object of concentration. *See also* Nadanusandhana.

Veda(s) [*Veda*]: (lit. knowledge) Among the most ancient, revered and sacred of the world's scriptures, the four *Vedas* are regarded as divinely revealed, eternal wisdom. They are: *Ṛgveda*, *Atharvaveda*, *Sāmaveda*, and *Yajurveda*.

Vibhuti [*vibhūti*]: (1) Power; splendour; greatness. (2) Sacred ash permeated by *mantras*, which is worn on the forehead and the body by Lord Shiva and his devotees.

Vijnanavadins [*vijñānavādin*]: Followers of one of the schools of Buddhism, which holds that external objects are unreal. That which appears to be external is actually an idea in the mind. However, the mind is real. This view is called subjective idealism (*vijñānavāda*). Vijnanavadins are also called Yogacharas.

Vimarsha [*vimarśa*]: (1) The Self-consciousness or Self-awareness of Paramashiva, full of *jñāna* and *kriyā*, which brings about the world process. (2) On an individual level, the aspect of consciousness through which one understands the specific characteristics of that that is known.

Viresha [*vīreśa*]: The lord of the senses, who has experienced the delight of the transcendental state of consciousness.

Vishistadvaitins [*viśiṣṭādvaitavādin*]: Followers of Ramanuja's "qualified monism", the main theory of which is that God is the only reality. Within Him there exist as parts the different unconscious (*acit*) material objects as well as the many conscious (*cit*) souls.

Vivartavadins [*vivartavādin*]: Followers of the Vedanta of Shankaracharya. This school holds that because of *māyā* the Ultimate Reality appears as something other than itself, like a rope appearing as a snake.

Void: (1) The state of nothingness experienced in deep sleep. (2) The state of the formless Absolute. According to the Buddhists, this is a state of non-existence. In Kashmir Shaivism, however, Void is emptiness in the sense that it is without manifest creation. It is not a state of non-existence because it has the nature of being, consciousness, and bliss.

Vyavaharika satta [*vyavahārikasattā*]: Empirical reality, which is limited in space and time.

Yoga [*yoga*]: (lit. union) The state of oneness with the Self, God; the practices leading to that state.

Yogacharas [*yogācāra*]: *See* Vijnanavadins.

Yogi [*yogī*]: (1) One who practises *yoga*. (2) One who has attained perfection through yogic practices. *See* Yoga.

Yogini [*yoginī*]: A female practitioner of *yoga*.

INDEX

Ābhāsas, 113-116, 157,159,162. *See also* Manifestation
Ābhāsavāda, 113-116
Abhedopāya. See Śāmbhavopāya
Abhinavagupta, 135, 217. *See also Īśvara Pratyabhijñā Vimarśinī; Tantrāloka; Tantrasāra.*
Absolute: bliss of, 31, 32; and the experience of a Siddha, 31, 57, 61, 68; in the form of sound, 209-211; "I am the Absolute", 61, 138; as individual soul, 5, 65; in Kashmir Shaivism and the world, 131; and Kundalini Shakti, 13; in Vedantic teachings, 138, 182. *See also* Supreme Reality
Actions, 184; fivefold, 21, 92, 108-109, 128, 165, 190; and four bodies, 85; fruits of, 8, 18, 62, 64, 83, 133, 144, 145-146; and limited knowledge, 83, 133, 144; right understanding of, 133, 143, 151, 219; and the Self, 6, 83, 133; towards Self-realization, 67, 204, 206, 210-215, 219; and Shakti Kundalini, 13; and *śaktipāta*, 18; as Shiva, 140, 178; of Siddhas, 28-29, 40-41, 56-57; and *spanda*, 168, 171, 172, 178. *See also Guṇas; Karma; Kriyāśakti*
Addictions, 70-71; of Baba, 73
Adhvā, 98. See also Śuddhādhvā
Adoni Lakshmibai, 48-49
Adornment, 70
Advaita, 131
Advaita philosophy, 130-136
Advaitavadins, 131
Āgamaśāstras, 163, 195. *See also* Scriptures
Agitation, 18, 92, 128
Aham, 6, 99, 150; *aham brahmāsmi*, 138; *aham vimarśa*, 177, 221; and the *spanda* principle, 172, 174. *See also* I-consciousness
Ahamta, 174
Akkamahadevi, 53
Alandi, 49
Allah, 129
Anāhata, See Nāda
Ānanda, 108. *See also* Bliss
Ānandaśakti, 14, 108
Aṇava (bheda/krīyā) upāya, 80, 81, 96-103, 104. *See also Upāyas*
Aṇavamala, 83, 132, 133, 145
Anupāya (gurukrpopāya), 105
Aparokṣānubhūti, 179, 180. *See also* Shankaracharya; Vedanta
Arjuna, 61, 186
Asankarya, 159
Āśrama, 36, 37, 93
Ātman. See Self
Ātmānanda, 135
Attachment, 44, 63, 86, 88, 94, 101, 144
Attainment, 76, 104, 105, 181; means of, 92, 139, 140, 212
Austerities, 220, 223
Avabhāsas. See Ābhāsa
Avadhūtas, 29, 223
Awakening, 87; supreme, 213; *See also* Kundalini
Awareness of Self, 57, 100, 174, 182; of Siddhas, 59; of unity, 90, 133. *See also Vidyā*

Baba. *See* Muktananda Swami
Bahinabai, 204, 214
Bapumayi, 46-47
Basaveshwar, 53
Bhagavadgītā, 52, 89, 121, 151, 184, 185, 186

Bhagiratha. *See* Legends
Bhairava. *See* Vijnana Bhairava
Bhairavi, 178, 201, 203.
See also Vijnana Bhairava
Bhatta Utpaladeva. *See Stotrāvali*
Bhedabheda Advaitins, 131
Bhedābhedopāya. See Śāktopāya
Bhedopāya. See Āṇavopāya
Bhogya/bhoktā, 139.
See also Subject/object
Bhūta. See Centring techniques
Bhuvana, 98, 171
Bimbapratibimba, 117-122
Bindu, 172, 176, 207
Bliss, 31, 179, 202, 205, 214-215; different types of, 22, 96-97, 214; and Kundalini Shakti, 6, 12, 14, 193; of the *mantra*, 92; and Nityananda, 74-75; and Paramashiva, 108-109, 175, 178; and Siddhas, 23, 24, 55, 59-61, 64, 212; and Siddha Yoga, 6; supreme, 150, 182, 214, 218; is the true nature of all, 128, 218; in Vedantic teachings, 169. *See also Saccidānanda*; Supreme bliss
Blue Being (Blue Lord), 25, 26, 74
Blue Pearl, 24-25, 26, 75
Bodies, the four, 19, 85; causal, 19; gross, physical, 7, 15, 18-19, 31, 74-75, 84-85, 92, 101, 102, 104, 132, 146, 154, 187, 214; subtle, 19, 85, 98, 132, 146, 173; supracausal, 19, 22
Bondage, 86, 98, 103, 181, 213; and ignorance, 83; and letters, 94, 173; right understanding of, 181, 219-220; due to *vikalpas*, 1-125, 127
Books, 126
Brahma, 55, 112, 185, 196
Brahman, 141, 182-186. *See also* Absolute, in Vedantic teachings
Brahmarandhra, 201, 206
Breath, 22, 98,101, 211. *See also Prāna*
Brotherhood, universal, 4, 143

Caste (class), 3, 6, 8, 46
Centring techniques, 97, 99, 197, 206, 210-212, 214
Chaitanya, 107. *See also* Consciousness; Paramashiva
Cakra. See Spiritual centres
Chandrabhaga, 46
Changadev, 50
Chanting, 16, 37, 47, 51, 71, 146; as therapy, 51
Chiti, 12, 160, 190-193
Chitshakti, 110-111, 162, 164
Citśakti, 14, 108. *See also* Illumination
Citta, 192. *See also* Mind
Christianity, 72
Class. *See* Caste
Company, 124, 126, 158
Compassion, 10, 223; of Guru, 25, 62; of Kuṇḍalini, 15
Concealment, 33, 108, 114, 119, 165
Consciousness, 92, 108, 113, 125, 185, 196; all-pervasive, 106, 141, 204; Blue Pearl and, 26; contraction of, 133, 191-192; and inner knowledge of Bhairava, 206; light of, 25, 26, 156, 185; Paramashiva, 106-109, 138, 141; powers of, 104-105; right identification with, 204; Siddha Yoga and, 3; as source of all actions, 134, 153; Universal, 193; and vision of the Siddhas, 57, 59-60, 61, 103, 160; world is the play of, 32-33, 66, 87, 133, 182-183.
See also Chitshakti; I-consciousness; Transcendental; Vijnana Bhairava; *Vimarśa*; Witness
Contemplation, 62, 93, 94, 98, 101, 213, 214; of *spandaśakti*, 172-178
Contentment, 23, 68, 71, 92, 143
Contraction. *See* Consciousness, contraction of; *śaktis*, contraction of
Conversation, 126
Creation, 12-13, 102, 190-191, 222; powers of, 14; Shiva-Shakti and, 176. *See also* Actions, fivefold; *Spandaśakti; Vimarśaśakti*
Criticism, 34, 63, 179
Cults, 4, 73

Darśana, 52
Dattatreya, 36
Death, 6, 82, 103, 151, 186
Deception. *See* Falsehood
Deep sleep state, 22, 85, 87, 101, 146
Deha, 107. *See* Bodies, gross, physical
Deluge, 209. *See also* World, cycles
Delusion, 21, 44, 57, 102, 149, 182, 183
Desire, 14, 18, 21, 45, 120, 128, 142
Destiny, 29, 82. *See also Karma*

Detachment, 7, 102, 187
Devotion, 33, 57, 65, 139, 219
Dhāraṇas. See Centring techniques
Dharma, 157
Dharmaraja, 35
Dhyāna, 96. *See also* Meditation
Discipline, 7, 8, 64, 93
Discrimination, 98, 163, 187
Dissolution, 102, 108, 165, 185
Divine sounds. *See Nāda*
Doer/non-doer, 56, 187.
See also Actions, as Shiva
Dreams, 22, 59, 60, 74, 182, 184, 195
Dream state, 74, 85, 87, 101, 146, 182
Duality, 33, 44, 90-92; 129; and fear, 220; and non-duality, 90, 94, 134, 174; and play of creation, 132; right understanding of, 60, 69, 86, 173, 212; Shiva in, 101, 139; and Siddha Yoga, 4; as source of misery, 44, 148; the story of Muktabai, 50-51; and *vikalpas*, 123-125. *See also Āṇavopāya; Bimbapratibimba; Māyā;* Shakti
Duryodhana, 35
Duty, 80
Dvādaśānta, 98, 200-201, 205, 211-212, 216

Ecstasy, 128; of the Siddhas, 23, 28-29, 42, 44, 61; and Siddha Yoga, 6, 7, 58
Ecstatic being. *See* Great beings
Effort, 67, 91, 146, 173; and *vikalpas*, 126. *See also* Actions, towards Self-realization
Effulgence, 21, 22, 24. *See also* Light
Ego, 23, 36, 40, 50, 55, 62, 64, 92, 93, 98, 223
Eknath Maharaj, 32, 71
Elements, the five, 112, 118; of gross and subtle bodies, 98; supernatural powers and, 98
Energy, 5, 15.
See also Kundalini; Shakti
Enlightenment, 217-219.
See also Great beings
Enmity, 11, 21, 63, 92
Envy, 21, 92, 181
Equality, 95, 212, 216; and the awareness of the Siddhas, 30-37, 44, 50, 62; in the teachings of the *Bhagavadgītā*, 185, 186
Eternal, 156, 170. *See also Sat*
Existence, 44, 162; *See also Saccidānanda*
Experience, 147, 196; Baba's, 73-76; categories of, 157, 162; within inner realms, 21-27; and inner Self, 6, 156; of Siddhas, 60, 64, 163; as subject and object, 175, 208. *See also* Bliss; *Spanda*
Extroversion, 143
Eyebrows, the space between, 23

Faith, 18, 51, 105, 153; blind, 93, 130
Falsehood, 3, 72. *See also* Guru, false
Family, 8, 72
Fantasies, 83, 202. *See also Vikalpas*
Fear, 18, 60, 63, 92, 123, 142, 220
Fearlessness, 60, 72, 186
Feelings, 82, 100, 143, 160, 215; God exists in, 89, 138, 204; from *mātṛkā*, 101.
See also Śāktopāya; Vikalpas
Fire, 10, 44, 168
Forgetfulness of Self, 55, 67, 105, 179
Formlessness, 28, 76, 138
Form(s), 43, 45, 76, 151, 161-162, 167-168, 172, 185, 187; as Shiva, 87, 138, 139. *See also* Reality, three kinds of
Freedom, 161, 168.
See also Bondage; Liberation
Fulfilment, 5, 142

Ganeshpuri, 47
Goal, 79, 139, 186, 220
God: attainment of, 56, 66, 151, 188, 193; under control of devotees, 51-53; as creator, 15; as the embodiment of all, 47, 143; grace of, 92, 158; as the Knower, 155; and love, 217; name(s) of, 51, 65; Siddhas immersed in, 28, 45; and the universe, 118-119, 147, 150. *See also* Actions, fivefold; Supreme Being; Supreme Principle, Supreme Reality; Vijnana Bhairava
God-consciousness, 4, 154
Grace, 92, 158, 202; as fifth action of Paramashiva, 108; of Guru, 15, 16, 19, 41, 62, 111, 187, 189, 199; and *spandaśakti*, 167. *See also* Actions, fivefold; Guru; *Śaktipāta*
Grāhaka/grāhya, 106, 131.

See also Subject/object
Great beings, 23, 43, 61, 63, 69, 117, 127, 150, 176, 220; focusing the mind on, 206. *See also* Saints; Siddhas
Greed, 10, 21, 157
Guṇas, 89, 97, 149, 183
Guru, 32, 40, 146; devotion to, 72; false *guru*, 71-72, 93; lineage and, 66, 72; qualifications of, 66-67, 73, 93; and *śaktipāta*, 16, 18, 191; and Siddha Yoga, 8.
See also Grace; Paramashiva; Shakti; *Śaktipāta;* Shiva
Gurudev, 40, 54, 71, 75, 222.
See also Nityananda Bhagawan
Gurugītā, 182
Gurukṛpopāya. See Anupāya; Grace
Guru om, 71, 74, 76

Hamsa. See So'ham.
Happiness, 11, 143, 157.
See also Jñānaśakti
Hari Giri Baba, 38
Hathayoga, 16
Hatred, 3, 5, 69, 88
Heart, 19, 41, 69, 99, 128, 186, 206; and breath, 21, 197, 201; inner and outer, 200, 216; God lives in, 187; lotus of, 21, 205; subtle channels of, 15.
See also Dvādaśānta
Heaven, 11, 28, 62
Hell, 11, 62
Hinduism, 72
Householder, 7, 53

"I", 63, 86, 99, 150, 161; and *vimarśa*, 177, 221. *See also Aham*; I-consciousness; I-principle
I Am That, 211
Icchāśakti, 14, 100, 108, 110, 132, 138, 145, 149, 158, 160, 170; as first form of Shakti, 171; and *turīyā* state, 85-87. *See also* Shakti; *Śāmbhavopāya;* Will
Icchopāya. See Śāmbhavopāya
I-consciousness, 86, 102, 108, 133, 147-148, 164-165, 167, 194, 198, 202, 217
Idam, 6, 99, 147-148, 160-161, 165; and *spanda* principle, 174; Shiva as, 115-116
Ideas, 64, 84, 220
Ignorance, 3, 27, 44, 60, 67, 95, 105, 172-173, 179-183, 217-218;
See also Bondage; Knowledge
Illumination, 108, 212.
See also Citśakti; Light; *Prakāśa*
Imagination, 149, 168, 177, 180, 220
Immanence, 131, 174, 178, 188
Immortality. *See* Self, nature of
Imperfection. *See Āṇavamala*
Impressions (karmic), 89, 109
Incarnation, 97.
See also Transmigration
Independence, 54, 100, 109, 138, 178
Individual, 55, 102, 142, 192, 208.
See also Bondage; Limitation; Soul
Inhalation/exhalation.
See Breath; *Prāṇa*
Initiation, levels of, 18, 20.
See also Śaktipāta
Intellect, 15, 55, 104, 111, 128, 173, 198, 220, 223; and Supreme Principle, 185
Intoxication, 71; by artificial means, 7, 93
I-principle, 114. *See also Aham;* I-consciousness; *Idam*
Ishwara Iyer, 223
Iśvara Pratyabhijñā, 144, 156, 157, 162. *See also* Utpalacharya
Iśvara Pratyabhijñāvimarśinī, 150, 160. *See also* Abhinavagupta

Janabai, 57
Japa, 104. *See also Mantra*
Jealousy, 5, 49, 63, 92, 143, 144, 220
Jesus, 72
Jīvanmukta, 150. *See also* Liberation, while in the body
Jnanadeva. *See* Jnaneshwar Maharaj
Jñānaśakti, 14, 85, 100, 108, 110, 132, 138, 149, 153, 157, 161, 171
Jñānasvarūpa, 154
Jñānopāya. See Śāktopāya
Jnaneshwar Maharaj, 25, 33, 49, 71, 85
Joy, 5, 7, 76, 92, 95, 157, 162; and the mind, 128; and the state of a Siddha, 58, 64. *See* Understanding, right
Judaism, 72

Kabir, 39, 72, 209-210
Kailasa, 37
Kalā, 98, 171
Karaṇa, 96-97.
See also Bodies, the four

Karma, 16, 89, 131-133, 144
Kārmamala, 83, 131-133, 145-146. *See also* Impressions
Kashmir Shaivism, 95, 224; on *ābhāsavāda*, 115; as *Bhedābheda Advaita*, 131; *bimbapratibimba* in, 122; on *karma*, 131-133; on the nature of *spanda*, 164-165, 176; origin of, 79-80; Siddha Yoga and, 6; on our Shivahood, 134-135; teachings of, 19, 26, 35, 66, 99, 218; on *yoga*, 64. *See also Śivasūtras*
Khecarīmudrā. See Mūdras
Knower, 59, 60, 156, 183, 185, 205. *See also* Consciousness; Subject/object; Witness
Knowledge, 13, 19, 41, 92-93, 171, 176; and action, 132-133; and bondage, 82-83, 93, 144; book-*jñānis*, 126; empirical, 162; *jñānamannam*, 92; *jñānambandhah*, 83, 84; of the Self, 134, 175; three forms of, 174; true nature of, 152, 154; and the universe in its four categories, 107; of the world, 82-84.
See also Jñānaśakti; Mind; *Vidyā*
Krishna, 29, 35, 61-62, 72, 129
Kriyās, 5, 19, 20, 75, 110; and *rajoguṇa*, 149
Kriyāśakti, 14, 85, 100, 108, 110, 132, 138, 153, 171
Kriyopāya. See Āṇavopāya
Kriya Yoga, 191
Kshemaraja, 135
See also Pratybhijñāhṛdayam; Spandanirṇaya; Śivasūtravimarśinī
Kumbhaka, 30, 201
Kuṇdalini, 6, 12-20, 31, 193, 205, 210. *See also* Chitshakti, Shakti

Languages, 84, 202 .
See also Letters; *Mātṛkā*
Legends: Bhagiratha, 9; ocean of milk, 184
Letters, 83, 84, 91, 92, 94, 173; deities of, 110; and *mantra*, 91; and *māyā*, 161; Shakti takes form of, 100. *See also Mātṛkā; Śāktopāya*
Liberation, 64, 143, 151, 181, 193, 201, 219-220; while in the body, 150, 175, 186, 208, 214
Life, 127, 215; love necessary for, 44; spiritual, 102
Light, 4, 18, 22, 64, 83, 99, 107, 185-186; Supreme, 84, 91. *See also* Blue pearl; Parasamvit; Parashakti; *Prakāśa*
Limitation, 84, 137; *See also* Bondage; *Malas*
Lineage, 72, 80; of Siddhas, 79
Love, 70-71; between Guru and disciple, 76; necessary for life, 43-44; Nityananda immersed in, 45-46; as Siddhas' abode/state, 23, 43-46, 69; and Siddha Yoga, 7, 11

Madhyadaśā, 200-201
Madhyamā, 202, 210
Madness, 57
Mahābharata, 34
Mahārthamañjarī, 216, 218
Maheshwarananda, 218
Malas, 83, 132, 192. *See also Āṇavamala; Kārmamala; Māyīyamala*
Mālinīvijayatantra, 94, 96, 171
Manifestation, 113, 171, 178, 211
Mantra, 90, 95, 171; Baba's experiences of, 73, 74-76; and awakening of Kundalini, 16, 18; power of, 86, 92, 164, 194; *vīrya*, 92; as words of a great being, 31, 102. *See also Adhvā; Guru Om; Japa; Oṃ namaḥ śivāya*
Marriage, 7
Mātṛkā, 92, 111; *mātṛkācakra*, 84, 95; *mātṛkāśakti*, 21, 84, 181; in the form of *nāda*, 210
Matter, 137, 147, 171, 184; as Shiva, 88
Māyā, 149, 161, 195, 220; and Chiti as *māyāpramātā*, 192
Māyāśakti, 144, 161
Māyīyamala, 83, 145
Means, 186; Guru is the, 66-76. *See also Upāyas*
Meditation, 40, 98-99, 198; and Blue Pearl, 25; and *śaktipāta*, 16; and Siddha Yoga, 3, 7, 9, 33; and *vikalpas*, 127. *See also Āṇavopāya*; Experience, within inner realms; *Vijñānabhairava*
Microcosm, 19
Mind, 6, 33, 41, 112, 173, 196, 223; Chiti becomes the, 192; and ignorance, 181; and meditation, 25,

192-193; "The mind is *mantra*", 90; and *prāṇa*, 99, 197; purification of, 198; and Siddha Yoga, 8,10; subconscious, 14; and the *upāyas*, 89-90, 95, 104. *See also Nirvikalpa*; Thought-free state; Thoughts; *Vikalpas*; Vedanta; *Vijñānabhairava*
Mirabai, 51-71
Miracles, 69; and miraculous powers, 86
Mokṣa. See Liberation
Money, 8
Mudrās, 73; *śaivīkhecarī*, 31; *vīrya*, 86, 92
Muktabai, 50-51
Muktananda Swami, 34, 58, 62, 217, 224; addictions of, 72-76; experiences with Nityananda, 39-42, 75-76; *sādhanā* of, 38, 76; on universe and God, 194
Mūlādhāra, 16, 206

Nāda, 207, 209-211
Nādānusandhāna, 97, 210
Nāḍīs, 15-16, 24, 98. *See also Suṣumnānāḍī*
Nāḍīsaṃhāra, 98
Nāma, 162
Namdev, 71
Name(s), 161-162. *See also* Reality, three kinds of
Nanakdev, 72
Nandapadma Order, 69, 72
Narada, Maharishi, 61, 63
Narasinga Swami, 47-48
Narayana, Lord, 47, 198
Nasrudin, Sheik, 75
Nationality, 6
Nations, 10
Nature, 133; one's own true, 6, 125, 148, 153, 182, 218. *See also Aham*
Nectar, 69, 71, 209
Negativities, 4, 10, 18
Nīla, 106
Nirvāṇa, 219
Nirvikalpa, 124-25, 127-128; *samādhi*, 123-124
Niṣkala, 196, 202. *See also* Transcendental
Nityānanda, 135
Nityananda Bhagawan, 28-33, 39-42, 44-46, 76, 223-24; teachings of, 30, 34, 39, 40. *See also* Muktananda Swami; Gurudev
Non-dual, 94, 104, 125, 155, 174. *See also Śāmbhavopāya*
Numbers 186

Objects, 20, 99, 158, 176, 180, 219; five aspects of, 162; and heart lotus, 205; and light, 180, 213; and outlook of Shiva, 137-141. *See also* Matter; Reality, three kinds of; *Sthānakalpanā*; Subject/object
Om, 213
Oṃ namaḥ śivāya, 37, 53, 146, 178
Omniscience, 37, 172
Oneness, 27, 160, 174
One-pointedness, 128, 173, 205, 211

Pada, 171
Pain, 8, 97, 121, 124, 148, 149-151, 180; and objects, 120, 157; we create, 97-98, 102, 173
Pañcadaśi, 212
Pañca kāñcukās. See Sheaths
Pandharpur, 46, 51-52
Parā, 211
Parabrahman. *See* Brahman
Paramārthasāra, 207
Paramashiva, 83, 105, 106-109, 146, 175; in Advaita philosophy, 130; contraction of, 83; immanent and transcendental aspects of, 108-109, 131, 141; and *sahajavidyā*, 100; and *śaktipāta*, 189; and Siddha Yoga, 4; as *spandaśakti*, 164; as substratum of all, 113; *See also* Consciousness; Shiva; Vijnana Bhairava
Parameshwari Shakti, 111, 156
Paramodaya, 213
Parasamvit, 83, 108. *See also* Paramashiva
Parashakti, 85, 92, 100, 196-197; forms of, 100; importance of, 203. *See also* Shakti
Paśyantī, 210
Pātañjaliyogasūtras, 127, 206
Paths, 98, 174; the six of Shakti, 171. *See also Adhvā*
Peace, 4, 11, 103, 143
Perceiver. *See Aham; Idam*; Subject/object

Perception, 121. *See also* Senses, of perception; Subject/object
Perfection, 4, 27, 55, 56, 64, 71, 105, 178, 224. *See also Pūrno'ham*
Pilgrimage, 57
Pleasure, 107, 121, 124, 148, 172, 215; and objects, 121, 157
Poet-saints. *See* Akkamahadevi; Basaveshwar; Eknath Maharaj; Janabai; Jnaneshwar Maharaj; Kabir; Mirabai; Muktabai; Namdev; Nanakdev; Rabi'a Basari; Sakhubai; Surdas; Tukaram Maharaj; Tulsidas
Power, 107, 112, 130; Supreme, 59
Powers: of action, 100, 108, 112, 171; of knowledge, 100, 112, 171; of will, 100. *See also Śaktis*; Supernatural powers
Praise, 86
Prakāśa, 105, 165, 212, 221, 223. *See also* Light
Prakṛti, 133. *See also* Nature
Pramāṇa, 107, 198. *See also* Knowledge
Pramātṛ, 107, 150, 153, 155. *See also* Knower
Prameya, 107, 150, 171, 176. *See also* Objects
Pramiti, 107. *See also* Understanding, right
Prāṇa, 16, 43, 96-97, 103, 107, 111, 146, 185, 216; and *apāna*, 199-201; and *prāṇāyāma*, 97, 98; and *spandaśakti*, 170
Prāṇaśakti, 103, 197
Prāpya, 139. *See also* Attainment
Praśnopaniṣad, 16
Pratibhā, 155-158. *See also* Consciousness, light of; Knower; Parashakti; *Pramātṛ*
Pratyabhijñā, 189-194
Pratyabhijñāhṛdayam, 181, 191, 200. *See also* Kshemaraja
Pravṛttivāda, 142-143
Prayer, 11, 196
Preservation, 185. *See also* Sustenance
Pride, 92, 220
Principle, 83, 164, 182, 204; of the Self, 68, 217, 221; as Shiva, 105, 134, 213; vibrations and the inner, 153, 158; *See also* I-principle; Supreme Principle
Principles, 84, 183, 192. *See also Tattvas*
Priya, 162
Processes, three. *See* Creation; Dissolution; Preservation, Sustenance
Psychic instruments, the four, 112, 119
Pulsation, 26, 85, 170. *See also Spanda*
Pure, 10, 62, 70, 149
Purity, 149, 154; of the Guru, 93
Pūrṇāhaṃtā, 174
Pūrṇo'ham ("I am perfect"), 27, 91, 126, 133, 177
Puryaṣṭaka. *See* Bodies, the four, subtle
Qualities, 174, 220; *See also Guṇas*
Rabi'a Basari, 53
Rajoguṇa, 149. *See also Guṇas*
Ram, 34, 72, 129, 223
Ranchod Bapuji, 37
Ranga Avadhut, 36
Rasa, 31
Reality, 129, 162, 174; three kinds of, 182. *See also* Principle; Supreme Reality; Truth
Realization, 27, 28, 68, 105; of Truth, 126
Rebirth. *See* Transmigration
Recognition, 189-194
Reflections, 155-158, 183, 219. *See also Bimbapratibimba*
Religions, 72, 202; Siddha Yoga view of, 3, 4, 8, 40, 217
Renunciation, 7, 29, 48, 157. *See also Saṃnyāsa*
Respect, 8, 11, 72
Revealer, 60. *See also Prakāśa;* Subject/object
Rgveda. *See Vedas*
Rituals, 105, 202
Rudra, 40, 185
Rūpa, 162, 172
Saccidānanda, 44
Sacchidananda, 202
Sadashiva, 110, 150, 178, 190
Sadguru, 126. *See also* Guru
Sadgurunath Mahārāj ki Jaya! 71
Sādhanā, 4, 80, 119, 126, 186; Baba's, 38, 76; completion of, 9, 100; of *dvādaśānta*, 216; and love, 43;

as means of attainment, 68, 102, 104, 191, 197; right understanding of, 151; and Shivahood, 140
Sages. *See* Poet-saints; Scriptural authors; Siddhas, contemporary; Women saints
Sahajavidyā. See Vidyā
Sahasrāra, 16, 23, 24, 74, 97, 191, 209, 210
Sai Baba of Shirdi, 38
Saints, 61, 223. *See also* Poet-saints; Scriptural authors; Siddhas, contemporary; Women saints
Sakala, 181-182
Sakhubai, 51-53
Samādhi, 87, 95, 146, 182, 210, 212; *nirvikalpa*, 123; of Nityananda, 44-45; shrine of Sai Baba, 38
Saṃsāra, 173. *See also* Worldly life
Saṃvit Parāmarśa, 147-148. *See also* I-consciousness
Sandipani, 29, 72
Sāṅkarya, 159
Saṃnyāsa, 47, 69, 88; *See also* Renunciation
Sat, 162
Satsaṅg, 37. *See also* Company
Sattva, 149. *See also Gūṇas*
Scientists, 15, 170, 209
Scriptural authors. *See* Abhinavagupta; Kshemaraja; Narada Maharishi; Patanjali; Shankaracharya; Somananda; Utpalacharya; Vasistha; Vasugupta. *See also* Siddhas
Scriptures, 91, 105, 139, 146, 196, 217, 224
Seeker, 90, 95, 101, 102, 134, 186; attainments of, 91-93, 100-102; and choosing a *guru*, 93; duty of, 80, 81, 84; experiences of, 5, 6, 14, 16, 17, 91, 92, 93; fully ripened, 105, 139-140; and knowledge, 82-83, 208, 221; and *mātṛkā*, 101; practices of, 205-206, 214; and recognition of own true nature, 124, 211
Seer. *See* Subject/object
Self, 3, 11, 67, 69; attainment of, 3, 80, 154, 181, 218; *caitanyamātmā*, 83, 106-107; as experiencer, 6, 187; ignorance of, 83, 98, 105; and love, 217; meditation on, 9; nature of, 6, 55, 85, 217-219; as *saccidānanda*, 44; seekers' experience of, 100, 147; as Shiva, 87, 105, 162; Siddhas' awareness of, 42, 45, 59, 60; and *spanda*, 162, 174; as world, 19, 87. *See also* Absolute; Brahman; Consciousness; God; Shiva; Supreme Being; Supreme Lord; Supreme Principle; Supreme Reality; Vijnana Bhairava
Self-effort. *See* Effort
Sense pleasures, 58, 76, 82, 101, 184
Senses, 84, 85, 100, 102, 145, 196; and *guṇas*, 97, 183; lord of, 86; of perception, 112; and *spanda*, 165, 167, 174
Seven experiencers, 108
Shaivism. *See* Kashmir Shaivism
Śākta, 100
Śākta (bhedābhedajñāna) upāya, 80, 89-92, 95, 96; and *vikalpa, nirvikalpa*, 127-128. *See also* Feelings; *Upāyas*
Shakti, 17, 20, 110-112, 124, 142; contracted, 192; dwells in *mūlādhāra*, 16; five powers of, 14; and *mātṛkā*, 92, 101; and *māyā*, 92, 101; and *śakticakra*, 112, 166, 173; and Shiva, 79, 99, 138, 168, 171, 177, 201, 203; and *spanda*, 164-166, 171, 174; three forms of, 14, 110, 171; as universal mother, 19, 176, 191; and the *upāyas*, 104; as the world, 12. *See also* Chitj; Kundalini; Parashakti; *Śaktipāta*
Śaktipāta, 12-20, 92, 156, 167, 189, 202, 203; and initiation, 17-18; and Kundalini, 12-20; as *spandaśakti*, 167. *See also* Grace; Guru
Śaktis (powers), 14, 100, 108; contraction of, 132; and *mātṛkācakra*, 84; origin of, 110; and *śakticakra*, 173. *See also Ānandaśakti; Citśakti; Icchāśakti; Jñānaśakti; Kriyāśakti; Mātṛkā; Māyāśakti; Prānaśakti; Pratibhā; Vimarśaśakti*
Śāmbhava (abheda/icchā) upāya, 80-81. *See also Upāyas*
Shankaracharya, 72, 138, 218. *See also* Vedanta
Sheaths, 103

Shining. *See* Objects, five aspects of
Shiva, 137-141, 149-151, 223; abode of (*sahasrāra*), 16, 24; five powers of 108-109; as individual soul, 107, 131, 204, 208; and Kashmir Shaivism, 79, 115, 122, 134; as knower, 107, 208; and *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*, 212, 223; principle of, 105; realization of, 104-105; and seeker, 100, 102, 134, 140-141, 174; and Shakti, 79, 99, 138, 168, 203; and *śaktipāta*, 156, 189; and *spandaśakti*, 165, 168, 174; state of, 31, 79, 100, 139, 177; and the world, 87, 112, 135, 141, 203, 213; worship of, 70.
See also Brahman; Paramashiva; *Pūrṇo'ham; Śivo'ham; Śivasūtras;* Vijnana Bhairava
Śivāvasthā, 178. *See also* Shiva, state of
Śivadṛṣṭi, 137-141, 169, 170.
See also Somananda
Shivahood, 122, 139
Śivaliṅgam, 40, 70
Śiva Mahimna Stotram, 177
Śiva nirvāṇa dikṣā, 175
Śivasamāveśa, 140-151
Śivasūtras, 63, 64, 83, 84, 90, 91, 92, 93, 101, 103, 106, 178, 192, 212, 213; and Kashmir Shaivism, 80, 135, 163. *See also* Vasugupta
Śivasūtravimarśinī, 87, 90, 189.
See also Kshemaraja
Śivo'ham ("I am Shiva"), 92, 128, 134, 150, 178
Shrikantha, 79. *See also* Shiva
Śrīmadbhāgavatam, 44
Śrutis, 218
Śuddhādhvā, 132
Śuddhavidyā. See Vidyā
Siddhahood, 16, 26, 29, 58, 63, 68, 101, 103; state of, 16
Siddharudha, 37
Siddhas, 34-42, 54-65; addictions of, 71; benefit of, 44, 55, 62; lineage of, 79; meditation on, 20; Nityananda, 28-33, 223; and Siddha Yoga, 7; state of, 23, 28, 31, 35, 45, 63, 85, 106; will-power of, 160; wisdom of, 9, 20, 29, 59, 69. *See also* Poet-saints; Scriptural authors; Siddhas, contemporary; Women saints
Siddhas, contemporary. *See* Bapumayi; Hari Giri Baba; Ishwara Iyer; Narasinga Swami; Nityananda Bhagawan; Ranchod Bapuji; Ranga Avadhut; Sai Baba of Shirdi; Siddharudha; Zipruanna
Siddha Yoga, 3-11. 17-18, 58, 66; disciplines of, 9, 64-65; inner experiences in, 21-27; and Kundalini, 12-18, 191; as Maha Yoga, 191; origin of, 4; teachings of, 5, 8, 33, 40
Sin, 8, 35, 186, 223
So'ham ("I am That"), 4, 20, 207; and Muktananda, 215; and Siddhas' awareness of, 58, 213; and breath, 96, 98, 199, 200
Somananda, 134, 137
Soul, 15, 54, 174; as the Absolute, 5; bound, 144, 149
Sound, 170, 175, 208
Space, 168, 190, 202, 204
Spanda, 110, 161; forms of, 167-168, 170; and Shakti, 164-165
Spandakārikās, 134, 136, 166, 207, 214; *Vivṛtti* to, 172-175.
See also Vasugupta
Spandanirṇaya, 176
Spandaśakti, 165, 170; forms of, 167-168; and *śaktipāta*, 167. *See also Spanda*
Speech, four levels of, 202, 210
Sphurattā, 110, 168, 204.
See also Spanda
Spiritual centres, 16
See also Sahasrāra
Spiritual practices, 5, 9, 127, 134.
See also Sādhanā
States of consciousness, 85, 101, 146.
See also Deep sleep state; Dream state; *Turīyā*; Waking state
Sthānakalpanā, 96, 97
Stillness, 55, 57, 169, 174, 212
Stotrāvali, 218, 219
Subject/object, 92, 155, 174, 212; and *ābhāsas*, 159-162; categories of, 107; enjoyer/enjoyed, 139; *grāhaka/grāhya*, 131, 153, 190; knower/known, 150, 208, 221; perceiver/perceived, 6, 110, 153; and principles of creation, 110, 192; seer/seen, 186, 196, 223; Shakti as, 13;

Siddhas' awareness of, 55.
See also Bimbapratibimba
Suffering, 32, 55, 126. *See also* Pain
Sufism, 72
Sun, 20, 54, 60, 70, 176, 223
Supernatural powers, 86, 98, 99, 210; as obstacles to unity, 91, 93, 95; and Jnaneshwar, 50
Supreme, 24, 87; Absolute, 61; Consciousness, 12, 102; Light, 84, 91, 207. *See also* Supreme Principle; Supreme Reality
Supreme Being, 10, 62.
See also Blue Being; Brahman; God; Vijnana Bhairava
Supreme Lord, 25, 165
Supreme Principle, 99, 153, 173, 184, 197, 198, 202; and extroversion, 143; nature of, 185, 195, 213; and non-duality, 129-131, 186, 202; and objects, 162, as the Self, 187; as Shiva, 88; and Siddha Yoga, 66; as source of *śaktis*, 84; and *spanda*, 163, 167; *upāyas* and, 86, 88, 90, 95. *See also* Paramashiva; Self; Vijnana Bhairava
Supreme Reality, 184; as Shakti, 204; as Shiva, 176; and *spanda*, 168, 177, 204. *See also* Supreme Principle
Surdas, 71
Suṣumnānāḍi, 16, 98, 193, 201, 205
Sustenance, 102, 108
Sūtras, 81. *See also Pātañjaliyogasūtras; Śivasūtras*
Svacchandatantra, 168

Tamoguṇa, 149. *See also Guṇas*
Tanmatras, 98. *See also* Elements
Tantraloka, 117.
See also Abhinavagupta
Tantras, 190
Tantrasāra, 107, 199.
See also Abhinavagupta
Tattva, 98, 171
Tattvas, 106, 108, 110, 132, 164.
See also Principles
Teacher, 66, 93. *See also* Guru
That, 22, 56, 185, 223. *See also So'ham*
Therapy, 51, 63, 93
This, 86. *See also Idam*
Thought-free state, 10, 21, 22, 94, 213.
See also Nirvikalpa; Turīyā
Thoughts, 82, 94, 114, 123, 178; cessation of, 87, 90, 150, 156; as reflections of Consciousness, 158.
See also Vikalpas
Time, 168, 190, 202
Transcendental, 22, 129, 162, 178; nature of Lord Bhairava, 196, 202.
See also Consciousness; Paramashiva; Vijnana Bhairava
Transmigration, 192
Truth, 44, 102, 105, 129, 158, 222; inner, 179; limited knowledge of, 83-84; realization of, 126; and Shiva, 104, 212; and Siddha Yoga, 4, 33; and state of a Siddha, 27, 29, 64, 68
Tukaram Maharaj, 25, 61, 71, 213
Tulsidas, 40
Turīyā, 22, 85-86, 101

Ucchāra, 96
Understanding, 161, 178, 198; Nityananda on, 32, 39, 41; of objects, 114-115, 152, 155; right, 44, 62, 107, 146, 151, 153, 174; wrong, 34, 62, 84, 150.
See also Knowledge, *Māyā; Pratibhā; Vikalpas*
Unity, 91, 99, 207, 219; and duality, 93, 98, 104, 132, 133, 134, 176; and *nirvikalpa*, 127. *See also* Oneness
Universe: Bhairava as the, 198-200; delight in, 102; and Chiti, 117, 190-192; as Consciousness, 106; embodiment of Shiva, 88, 111, 115; four categories of the, 107; manifestation of, 113; and *mātṛkāśakti*, 92; right identification with, 208; Shiva-Shakti and, 110, 165, 170, 176; and a *yogī's* experience, 25, 88, 99, 160, 175
See also World
Unmanī, 45. *See also Samādhi*
Unmeśa, 110, 172. *See also Spanda*
Upaniṣads, 16, 91, 123, 129, 190, 198, 215
Upāyas, 197; purpose of, 80, 89, 90-91, 104-105, 125, 146.
See also Āṇavopāya; Śāktopāya; Śāmbhavopāya
Utpalacharya, 116, 135.
See also Īśvara Pratyabhijñā

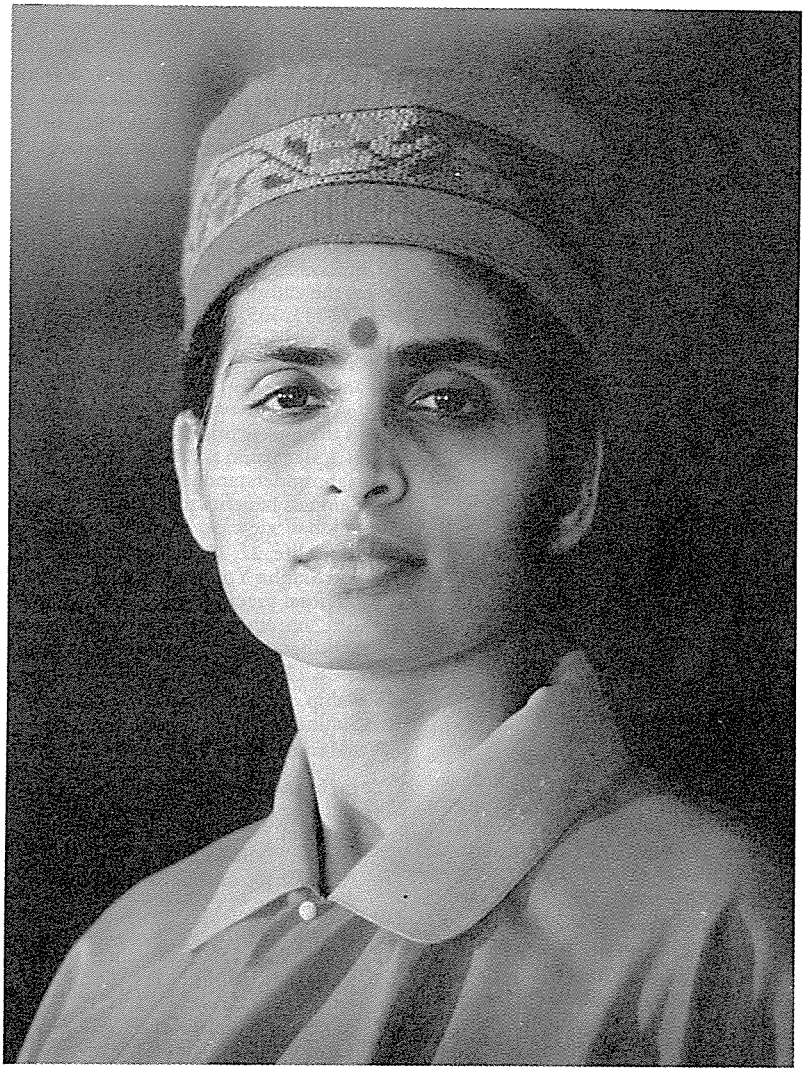
Vaikharī, 202, 210

Vākyasudhā, 123-124.
See also Shankaracharya; Vedanta
Varṇa, 96-97, 171
Vasishtha, 72. *See also Yogavāsiṣtha*
Vasugupta, 32-33, 81, 134, 163.
See also Spandakārikās
Vedanta, 179-188.
See also Shankaracharya
Vedas, 61, 179, 190; *Rgveda*, 171
Vibhūtispanda, 163
Vibration, 100, 120, 170, 197, 208-209.
See also Spanda
Vidyā, 91; *aśuddhavidyā*, 126; *sahajavidyā*, 99-102, 103; *śuddhavidyā*, 126.
See also Knowledge; Unity
Vigilance, 8, 62, 173
Vijñānabhairava, 128, 195, 203, 204, 205, 206, 208, 211, 213, 214, 215, 217, 219
Vijnana Bhairava, 195; and *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*, 213-214, 221-223; and *prāṇa*, 197, 199, 201; as the Self, 197-198, 217-221, 223; and Shakti, 196-197, 203; as Supreme Principle, 195, 203, 213; transcendental nature of, 196, 202. *See also Dvādaśānta*; Shiva; Supreme Principle
Vikalpas, 123-128. *See also* Mind
Vimarśa, 105, 120, 160, 221; and meditation, 212, 214; as Shiva, 223
Vimarśaśakti, 161, 165
Vishishtadvaitins. *See* Advaita
Viresha, 86
Visargas, 125, 169
Vishnu, Lord, 70
Viṣṇusahasranāma, 177
Vision, 34, 57, 176, 199, 216-217
Vitthal, 47
Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, 182.
See also Shankaracharya; Vedanta
Void, 59, 129, 209
Vow, 7, 8, 102

Waking state, 22, 74, 85, 87, 101, 146, 182
Wheel of birth and death, 186.
See also Transmigration
Will, 18, 83, 84, 87, 160, 191.
See also Icchāśakti
Wisdom, 24, 196, 202; of Siddhas, 8, 9, 20, 29, 59, 69
Wish-fulfilling gem, 171
Witness, 22, 62, 103, 129, 212.
See also Knower
Women saints, 53. *See also* Adoni Lakshmibai; Akkamahadevi; Bahinabai; Janabai; Mirabai; Muktabai; Rabi'a Basari; Sakhubai
World: as bliss, 215; as Consciousness, 33, 87, 135, 148, 197, 214; cycles, 55, 170; drama of the, 100; as the embodiment of one's feeling, 89; as the embodiment of Shiva, 88, 112-113, 135, 212; five elements of, 109; and God, 54, 89, 118; "is as you see it", 28, 35, 141; and *karma*, 131; as Kundalini, 12; *lokānandaḥ samādhisukham*, 212; as the one Truth, 222; as a playground, 208; and right understanding, 178, 180-181; Siddhas' benefits to, 40, 103; Siddhas' view of, 27, 28, 39, 43
Worldly life, 22, 173; and Siddha Yoga, 4-5, 7; and spiritual practice, 8-9, 93-94, 102; and Supreme Reality, 177; and theory of extroversion, 143
Worlds, 113-114; the three, 54
Worship, 40, 196, 203, 217, 218; of Siddhas, 45, 57
Worthiness, 105, 132

Yoga, 65; and divine sound, 208-211; and love, 76; and the mind, 128; stages of, 64, 87, 93.
See also Haṭhayoga; Kriyās; Pātañjaliyogasūtras; Siddha Yoga; *Śivasūtras*
Yogavāsiṣtha, 28, 35, 141
Yogī, 119, 128, 153; experiences of, 26; powers of, 102-103, 119, 201; practices of, 210-212, 214, 216, 219-221; state of, 86-100, 193, 213-214.
See also Siddha, state of
Yoginī, 50-53. *See also* Women saints

Zipruanna, 36



Swami Chidvilasananda

The Tradition of the Siddha Yoga Lineage

For many years one of Swami Muktananda's close disciples acted as his translator for his public talks, his private conversations and for many of his books – *Secret of the Siddhas* among them. In 1982, some six months before Swami Muktananda took *mahā-samādhi*, this disciple took the vows of *saṃnyāsa* and received the name Swami Chidvilasananda. At that time Swami Muktananda passed to her the power to transmit *śaktipāta*.

Since that time Swami Chidvilasananda, or Gurumayi as she is now widely known, has continued in this tradition, freely bestowing the spiritual awakening – *śaktipāta* – and guiding the development of seekers throughout the world. Wherever Gurumayi goes, whatever she says, whatever actions she performs, she conveys the Siddhas' message of love: love for God, love for the inner Self, love for the natural universe, love for all beings. "It should not be a surprise that we want to spread God's light in this world," she says. "That is why we are born. The purpose of human birth is to live the life of God, a life filled with love."

On the path of Siddha Yoga meditation, the attainment of this constant love comes through the exquisite interplay between the Master's grace and the seeker's effort. Eventually the seeker, lifted out of his or her limited identity, soars into a state of freedom, filled with compassion and God's unconditional love. This is the promise and the blessing of the Siddhas.

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